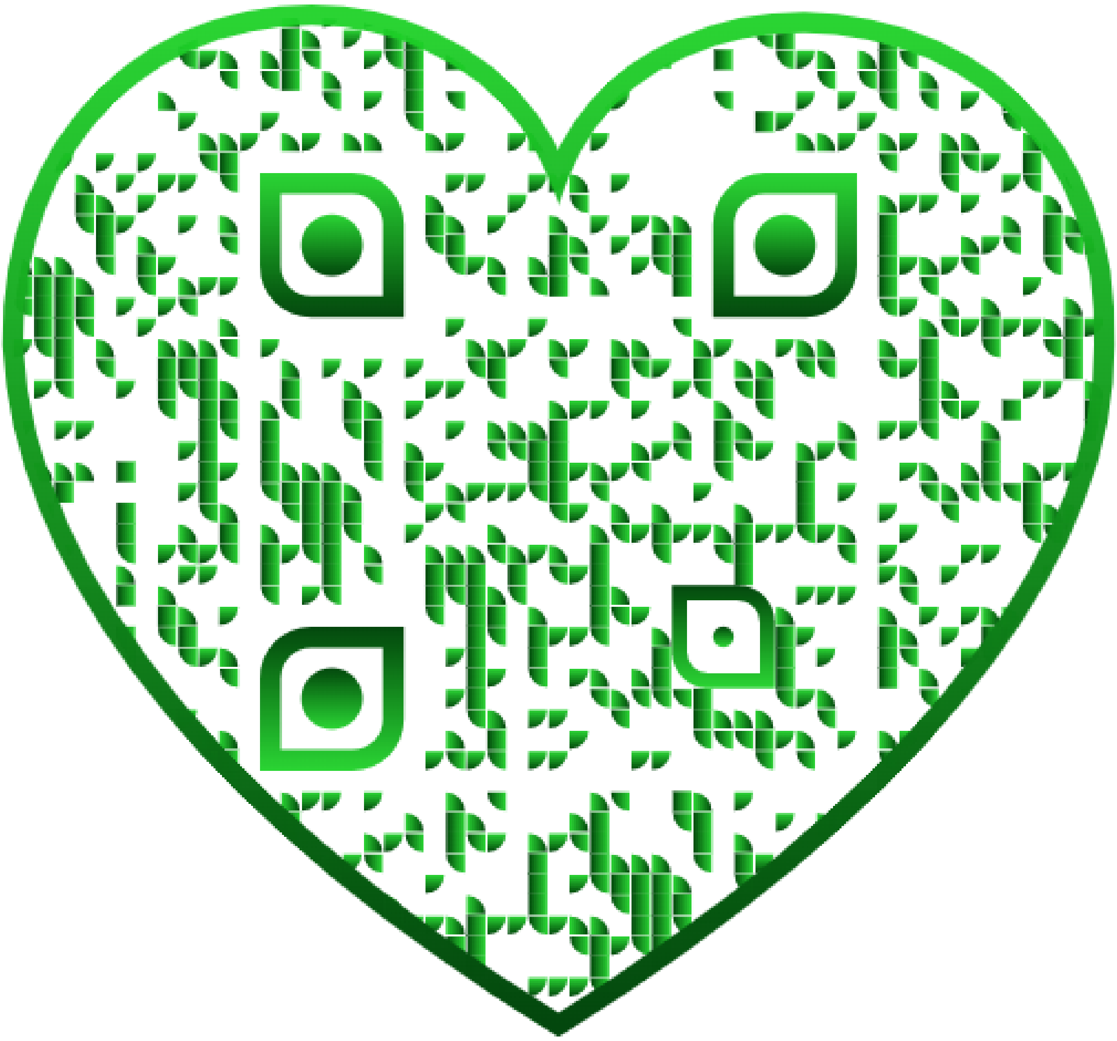
INSIDE FRANCES FEATHERSTONE • ART LOVER'S GUIDE TO FLORIDA • FIGURATIVE ART • ERIC FISCHL

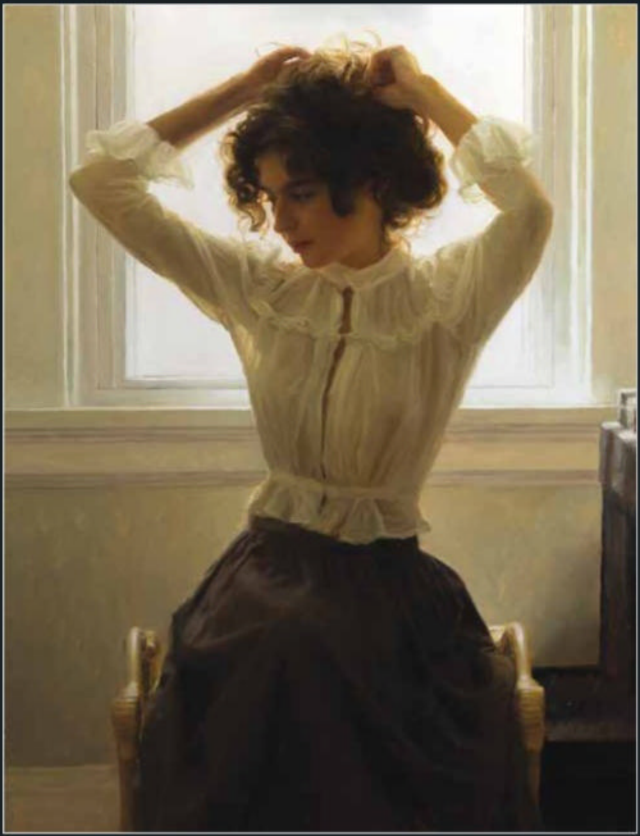
DECEMBER 2025 **ISSUE 242**

AMERICAN art COLLECTOR



CAROLINE NELSON

Recent Paintings



"Awaiting" Oil on Panel 24.5" x 18"

December 18, 2025 - January 3, 2026

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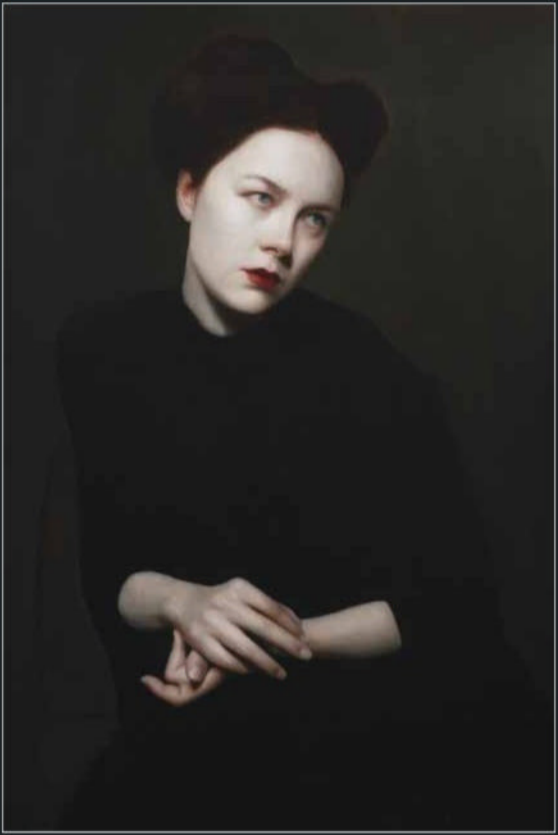
MIRIAM HOFFMANN

Debut Exhibition



"Within the Shadows" Oil on Linen 36" x 24"

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Thank you fo

Wishing you warm

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Andrea Kowch, *Unexpected Company*, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 60 in or sharing this year with us.

th, joy, and beauty this holiday season.

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Art for the Holidays

Welcome to the December issue of *American Art Collector*! December is a great time of the year regardless of the climate. Here in Arizona we decorate trees and cactus and the art season is in full swing. Holiday cheer abounds. In New York they are bundling up and layering fashionable clothes for a cold winter's day of gallery shopping. In Dallas, it's around 62 degrees, sunny and crisp, and a perfect day for art collecting. The point is, no matter where you live and travel to explore the arts, the weather is part of the mood—and December doesn't let you forget it. You are likely traveling more this time of year, seeing family and attending holiday events. It's loaded with busy excitement. *American Art Collector* is aware of this as we feature our Art Lovers Guide to Collecting Fine Art in Florida. From St. Augustine to Miami, the art market is prolific in this leg of the United States. Starting on Page 56, you can find some of the most festive galleries to visit in the Sunshine State.

This month we sponsor big Florida shows like *Spectrum Miami* and *Red Dot Miami*. Produced by Redwood Art Group, the fairs take place under one roof from December 3 through 7. Adolfo and I will be in Miami for those shows, as well as *Art Basel*, and all the other highlights of *Miami Art Week*. We are excited about being in this scene. While there is plenty of contemporary realism at these shows, they also cross over into abstract, modern and installation art as well. It's going to be great to be there as we celebrate Florida in our pages. If you will be at any of these shows in Florida please reach out to us. We would love to talk to you at the show. We hope our guide and coverage inspire you to get to Florida in December.

Gift giving is personal, especially when the gift is art. Inside we have more than 10 gallery previews to peruse full of small- and large-scale works of top-notch contemporary realism. Art is meaningful and introducing a friend or family member to art is a gift in itself. As we look at collector homes across the country, we can say with authority that you can never have too much beautiful art. That is our insider tip of the month.

As we forecast into 2026 it is looking excellent for collectors who want to discover top artists across the country. The shows we are hearing about in New York and Los Angeles and the rest of the country in the coming year are exceptional. We still have a month left of 2025 and, if you haven't bought a piece of art in 2025, December is your last chance to do so! We think you will find what you are looking for inside these pages.

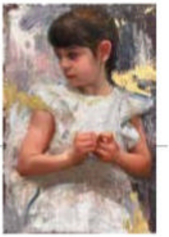
Happy Holidays to you and your families!

Wendie Martin Adolfo Castillo

Wendie Martin and Adolfo Castillo
Publishers

ON THE COVER

Timothy Rees, *Apphrehension*, oil and 24K gold on linen panel, 24 x 16 in. **Available at Bonner David Galleries, Scottsdale, AZ. See our coverage on Page 84.**



International Artist Publishing — Since 1998

AMERICAN art COLLECTOR

DECEMBER 2025 / MONTHLY

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www.AmericanArtCollector.com

ARTWORK DETAILS - Jivan Lee : *Rift Valley - Early Storms,* Geoffrey Gersten : *Bottoms Up,* Tony Abeyta : *Bird Sanctuary*

“If I create from the heart, nearly everything works; if from the head, almost nothing.”

- Marc Chagall

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Time Flies

"Magazine time," as I like to call it, is a funny thing. This is the December issue but I'm writing this on the last day of October as we wrap up another edition of *American Art Collector* and ship it off to our press, so it can arrive at your door (and on newsstands) by the end of November.

Essentially it's like living in the present and the future at once. It's probably not the most Zen way to live but if you work in print media you've accepted it's a labor of love, and maybe, like British writer Douglas Adams once said, even "love the deadlines [and] the whooshing sound they make as they fly."

We know that working so far ahead can also be challenging for our gallery partners, especially this time of year, when the holidays interrupt the normal rhythms and many are taking a breather before barreling into the new year. We get it, but for us there is no rest for the wicked. So, this is a gentle reminder that we work two months out so please let us know about your exhibitions well in advance! Nothing makes me groan like when I learn about a show I would have loved to cover after that month's issue has long since sailed.

Here at *American Art Collector*, we review the past, evaluate the present and plan for the future. Each year, we look over what worked, what to carry over into next year, what to shed, and what we can add or change to keep us fresh.

This issue contains our 17th annual Collector's Focus dedicated to figurative art and our 18th annual Art Lover's Guide to Florida. Clearly, we've kept these special sections around for all these years because they are favorites of our subscribers. Figurative art is one of the most timeless genres and among the most popular with artists and collectors. Beginning on Page 50, you will see why. And what better time of the year to go to Florida, when the weather is perfect and the art experiences are at their peak. Turn to Page 56 to learn more.

In 2026, you are going to find all of the classic content you've come to expect in *American Art Collector* along with quite a few exciting surprises that we will unveil in the coming months. Please be a part of making *American Art Collector* the best it can be—send us your artwork, send us your exhibition schedules, tip me off to artists you've been following, let us know about recent art sales so we can highlight them in our Sold! pages. There are so many ways to get involved. We're open to them all.

See you next year!

Sarah Gianelli

Sarah Gianelli
Managing Editor
sgianelli@americanartcollector.com

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AMERICAN art COLLECTOR

DECEMBER 2025 / MONTHLY

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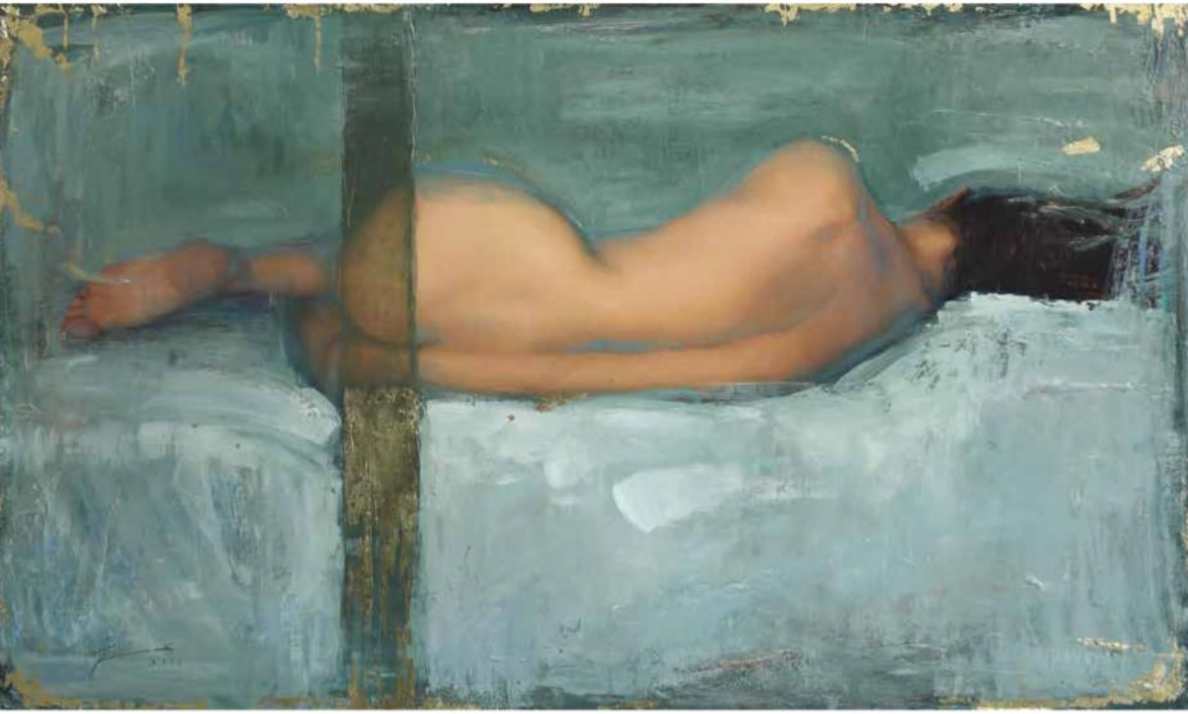
ON EXHIBIT: DECEMBER 4-31, 2025 | SCOTTSDALE



“Dysania” oil and 18K gold on linen panel | 28" x 48"

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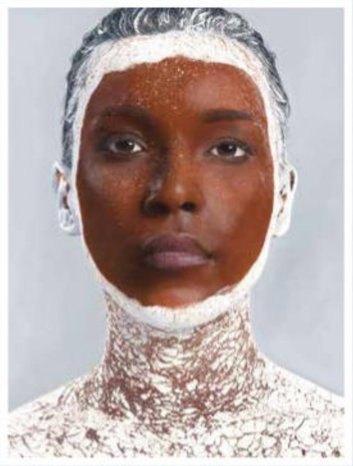

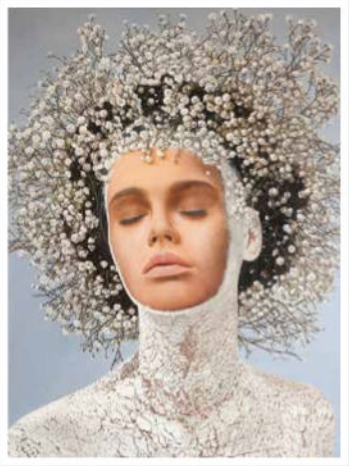

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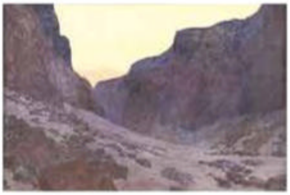
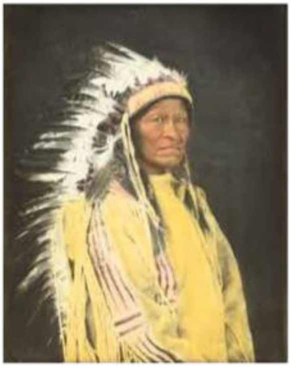


Ferdinand Harvey Lungren (1857-1932)

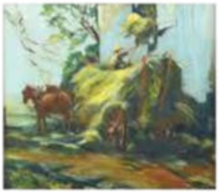
Navajo (Diné) Transitional Blanket

Navajo (Diné) Teec Nos Pos Rug



Carl Moon (1878-1948)

Carl Moon (1878-1948)



Armin Hansen (1886-1957)

Hopi Olla by Fanny Nampeyo

AUCTION BEGINS

Friday, January 23 | 4:00 PM **MDT**

OLD WEST EVENTS

OLD WEST & NATIVE AMERICAN ART SHOW

As part of a multi show event, the Las Vegas Antique Arms Show that brings together hundreds of leading exhibitors from across the country, the Old West & Native American Art Show offers the finest authentic Western art, artifacts and collectibles for public sale. An extraordinary mix of vintage and contemporary Western and Native American material for every level of collecting will be offered across the following categories:

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◊ Baskets
◊ Bits
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◊ Jewelry
◊ Fine Art
◊ Kachinas
◊ Saddles
◊ Antique Firearms
◊ Rare Artifacts
◊ And More

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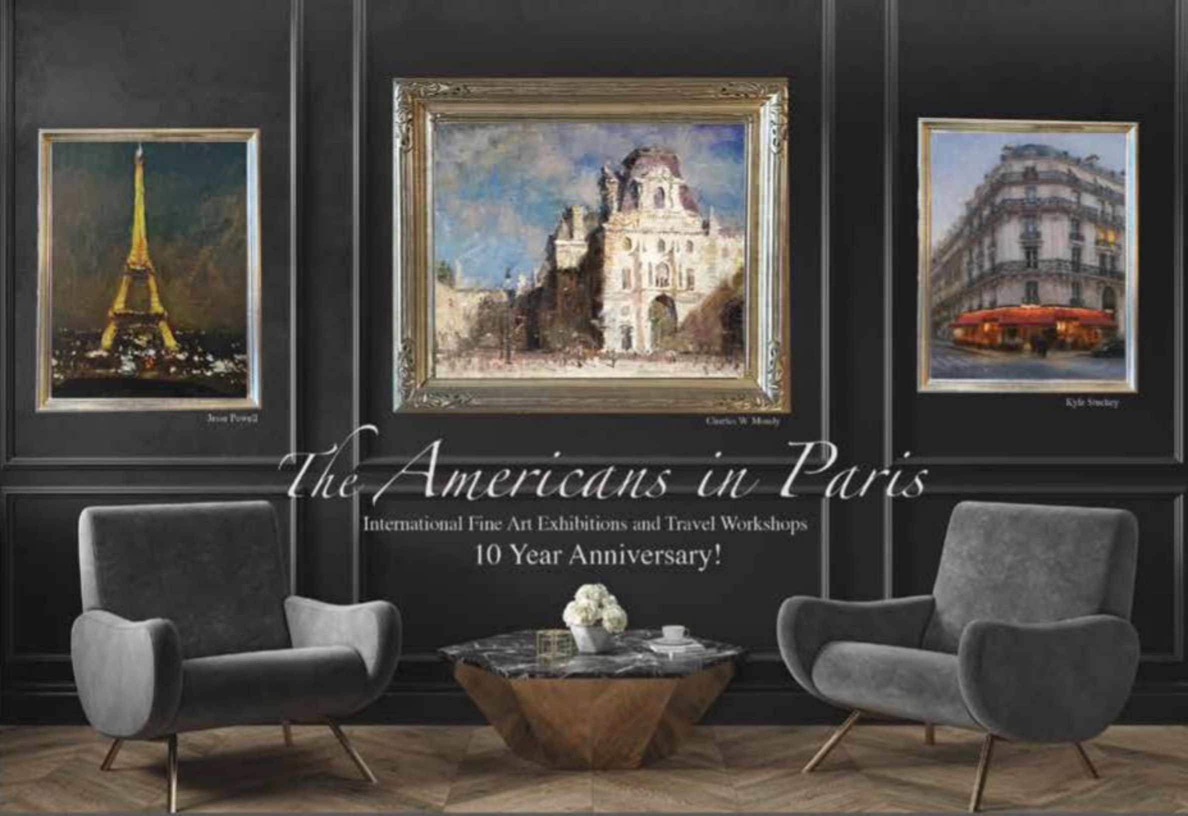
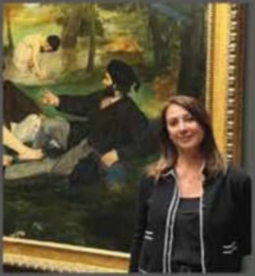
MORPHY SHOWS



The Americans in Paris

International Fine Art Exhibitions and Travel Workshops

10 Year Anniversary!



The Americans in Paris fine art project was created in 2016 by artist/writer/curator Vanessa Françoise Rothe and has since become an international success, now celebrating its 10 year anniversary! AIP's mission is to encourage today's fine artists to be inspired by the rich history, museum masterworks, culture, art, literature, architecture, cuisine, fashion, and beauty of Paris and France. With hard work and dedication, AIP has enjoyed multiple successful exhibitions at leading fine art galleries in New York, Los Angeles and Paris, France, as well as presented art history lectures, live art demonstrations and exciting travel workshops. We have collaborated with Workshops in France to bring our exciting travel workshops to the public. We hope you can join us! The innovative fine art project continues to make art history by directly inspiring the subjects of contemporary artists, creating vital exhibition opportunities, as well as educating collectors on both art history and how fine art is being created today. Look for our upcoming art exhibitions and lectures in New York. Special thanks to our supporters: American Art Collector and International Aritst magazines, Rembrandt/Royal Talens NA, Workshops in France and the Art Renewal Center.

AIP public workshops are hosted by

WORKSHOPS in France

VanessaRotheFineArt.com vanessarothe@icloud.com
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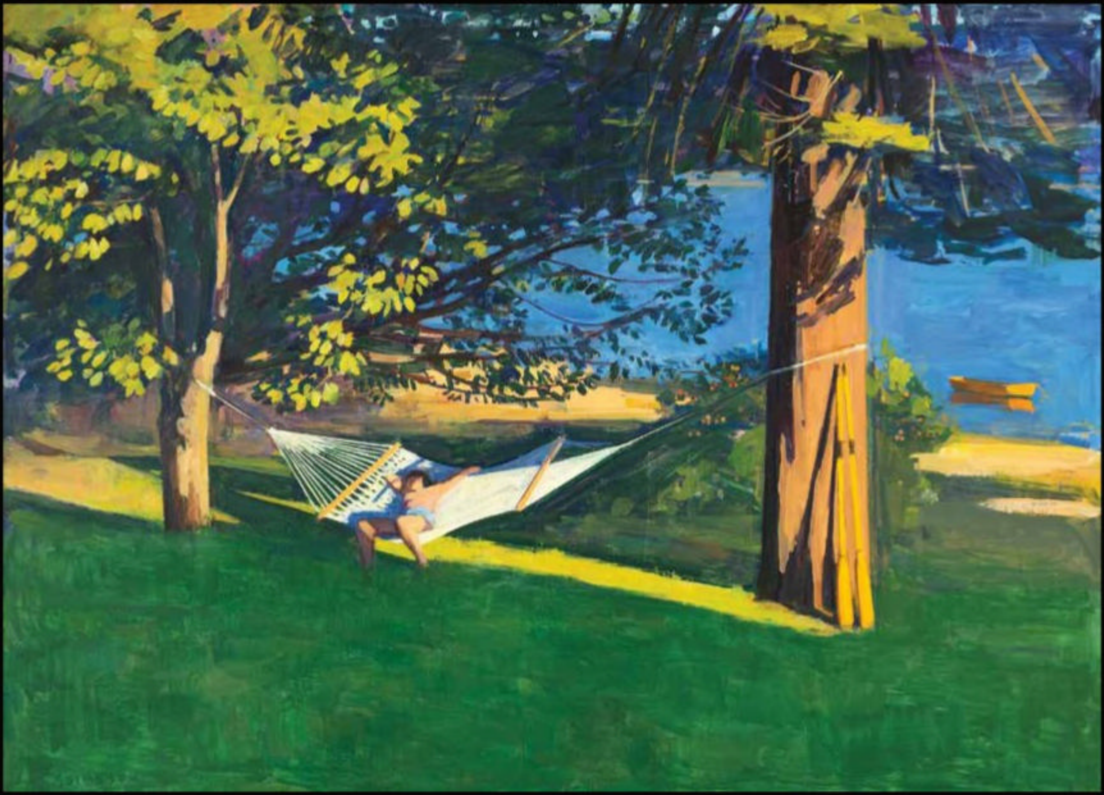
Vanessa Rothe's
AMERICANS in Paris

Kurt Solmssen



"Siesta", oil on canvas, 50x70"

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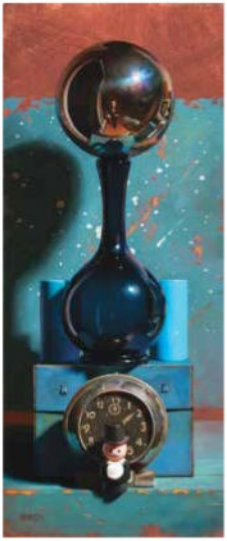
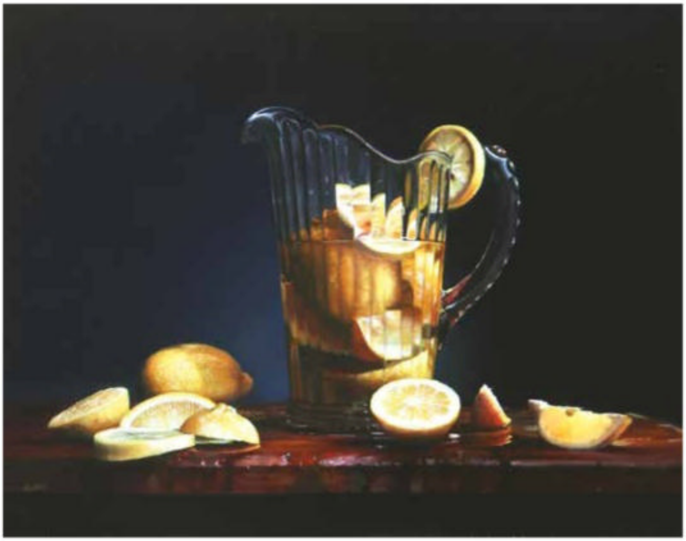
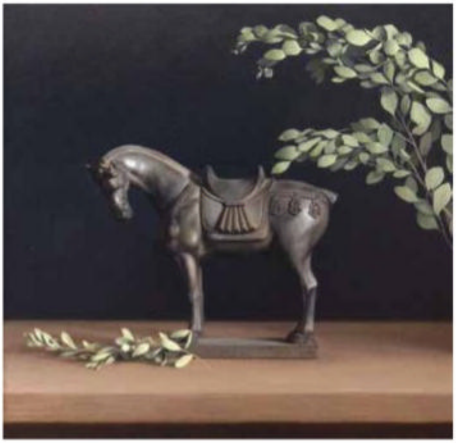
December 1- January 3, 2026



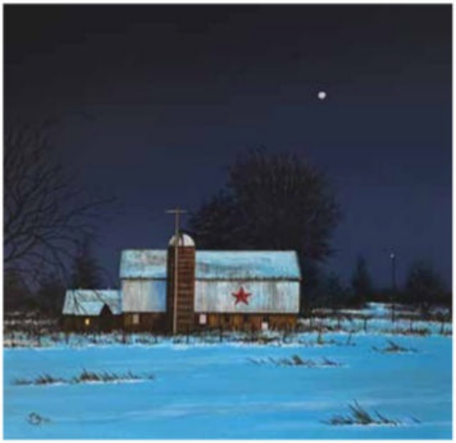
Julie Beck, *Pie Are Squared*, Oil, 17 x 7"



Larry Preston, *Pitcher of Lemons*, Oil, 14 x 18"



Christina Mastrangelo, *Patience and Wisdom*, Oil, 23 x 25"



Del-Bourree Bach, *Red Star at Night*, Acrylic, 12 x 12"

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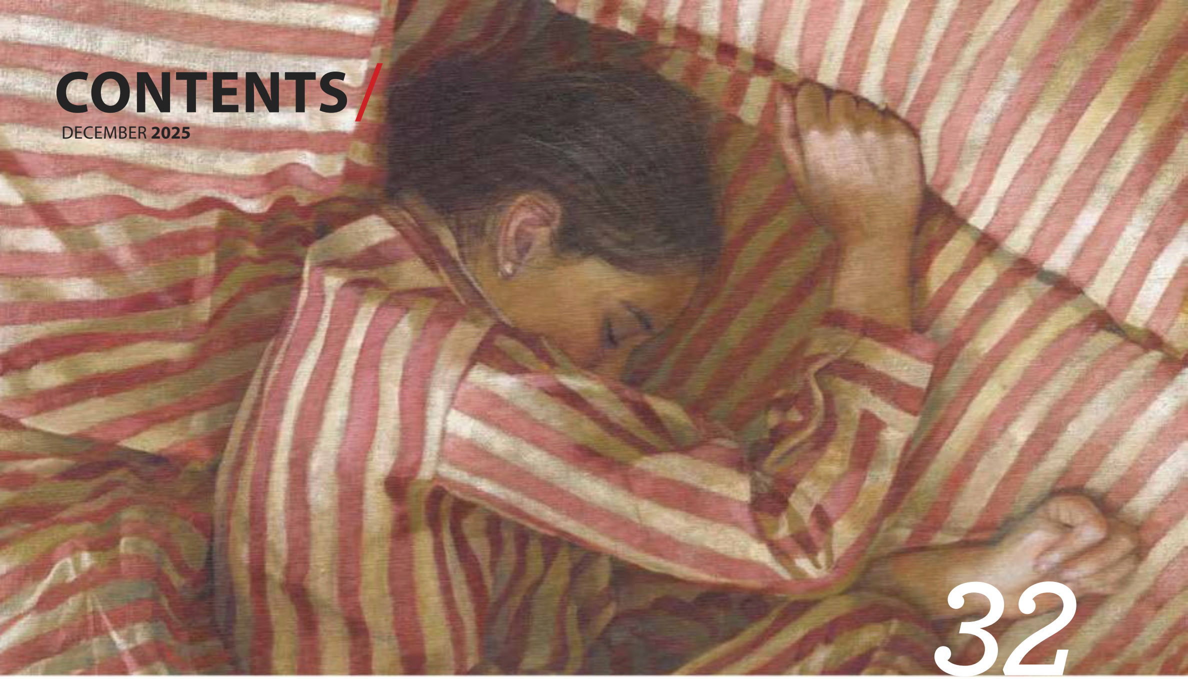
CONTENTS

DECEMBER **2025**



Features

32 **Frances Featherstone: Field of Dreams**
By Sarah Gianelli

38 **Jeremy Miranda: Spring's Promise**
By John O'Hern

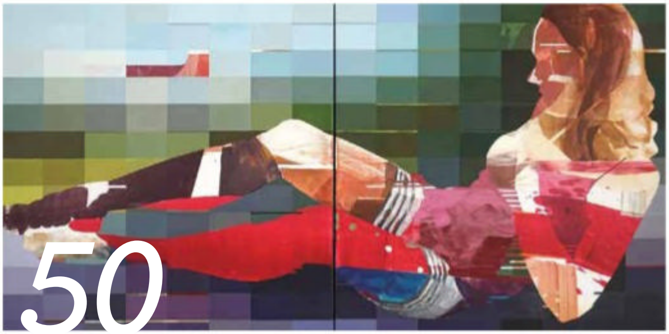
Special Sections

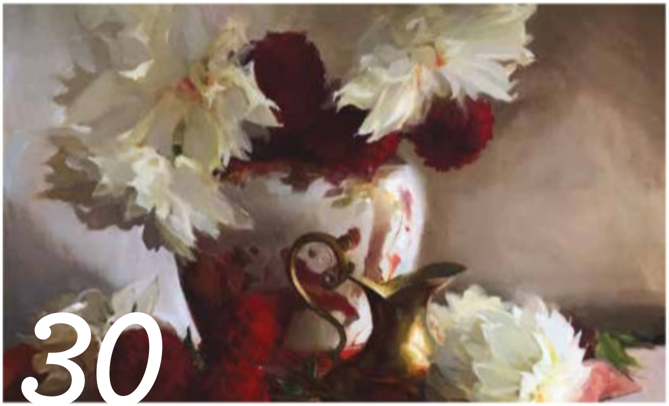
50 **The Human Experience**
Collector's Focus: Figurative Art

56 **The Art Lover's Guide to Collecting Fine Art in Florida**

Art Fair & Art Show Previews

30 **The Virtuosos of the OPA**
Sheridan, WY





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CONTENTS /

DECEMBER **2025**

Upcoming Solo & Group Shows

66
New York, NY
CAROLINE NELSON & MIRIAM HOFFMANN
Old as Time

70
Romeo, MI
GROUP SHOW
Celebrating Artists

74
Alexandria, VA
GROUP SHOW
Little Impressions

78
Madison, CT
GROUP SHOW
Winter Wonderland

82
Santa Fe, NM
GROUP SHOW
Tiny Treasures

84
Scottsdale, AZ
TIMOTHY REES
Gilded Souls

86
Scottsdale, AZ
TAD RETZ
Meant to Be

88
Santa Fe, NM
GROUP SHOW
Full of Heart

90
Scottsdale, AZ
GROUP SHOW
Small Originals

92
Milwaukee, WI
GROUP SHOW
Nature's Dialects

Museum Previews

94
Phoenix, AZ
ERIC FISCHL: STORIES TOLD

98
St. Petersburg, FL
BEN STEELE: A POP OF ART!

Event Previews

108
Miami, FL
SPECTRUM & RED DOT MIAMI

112
Los Angeles, CA
LA ART SHOW

Artist Focus

114 CAROLYN LINDSEY
115 MO MYRA
116 MICHAEL JAMES

Award Winners

100 ZOLTÁN BOROS
104 AMANDA KAZEMI
106 JESSIE BABIN

Departments

CALENDAR **18, 20**
SOLD **117, 119**

Coast-to-Coast Coverage

ARIZONA
Scottsdale

CALIFORNIA
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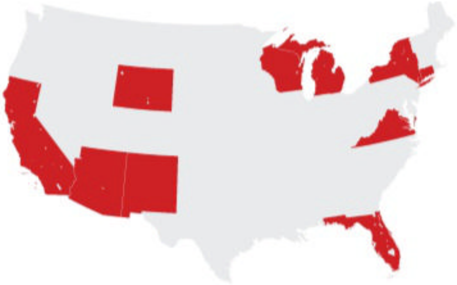

LUMINATO
GALLERY

Installation image of Luminato Gallery featuring artworks by Emre Namyeter, Jamie MacLean, Vladimir Kanic, and Victoria Kovalenchikova, 2025.

CONTEXT
art miami

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VIP Preview December 2nd

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OUR GUIDE TO SPECIAL EVENTS, SALES & AUCTIONS FROM COAST TO COAST

December 2025

On View Now

Ben Steele: A POP of Art!
The James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art
St. Petersburg, FL • (727) 892-4200
www.thejamesmuseum.org

On View Now

December Show
RJD Gallery
Romeo, MI • (586) 281-3613
www.rjdgallery.com

November 28-December 9

Annual Miniature Works Show
Blue Rain Gallery
Santa Fe, NM • (505) 954-9902
www.blueraingallery.com

December 3-27

Art You Can't Buy & Holiday Miniature Sale
Gallery 1261
Denver, CO • (303) 571-1261
www.gallery1261.com

Through December 4

Patricia Watwood: The Fey Wild
Equity Gallery at the New York Artists Equity Association
New York, NY • (931) 410-0020
www.nyartistsequity.org

December 4-18

Tad Retz: Chronicles
Paul Scott Gallery
Scottsdale, AZ • (480) 596-9533
www.paulscottgallery.com

December 4-31

12 x 12 Holiday Show
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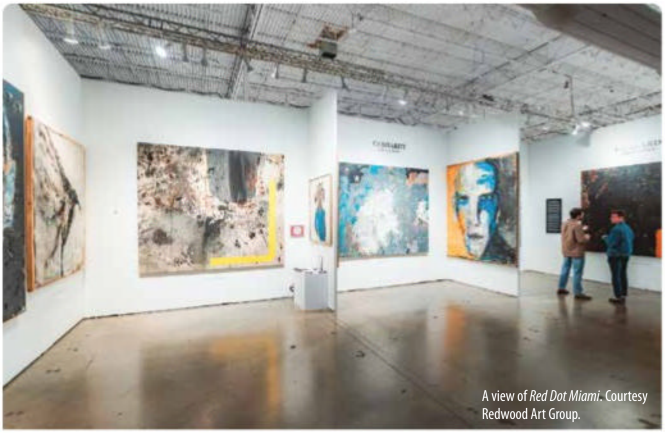

A view of *Red Dot Miami*. Courtesy Redwood Art Group.

December 3-7

Spectrum Miami and Red Dot Miami
Mana Wynwood Convention Center » Miami, FL
www.redwoodartgroup.com

December 4-31

Timothy Rees: Gilded Souls
Bonner David Galleries
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Through December 5

The American Artists Professional League: 97th Grand National Exhibit
Skylight Gallery, Salmagundi Club
New York, NY
www.aaplinc.org/97-gne

December 5-31

Small Works Show
Giacobbe-Fritz Fine Art
Santa Fe, NM • (505) 986-1156
www.giacobbefritz.com

Through December 6

Armine Bozhko
George Billis Gallery
Fairfield, CT • (203) 557-9130
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Dec. 6, 2025-Jan. 5, 2026

Small Works Invitational
Principle Gallery
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Dec. 10, 2025-Jan. 10, 2026

Robert Kipness: Reveries
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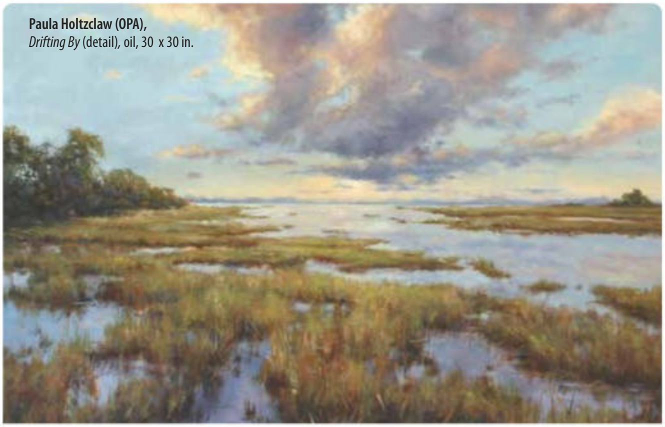
art SHOW CALENDAR


Paula Holtzclaw (OPA), *Drifting By* (detail), oil, 30 x 30 in.

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The Virtuosos of the OPA

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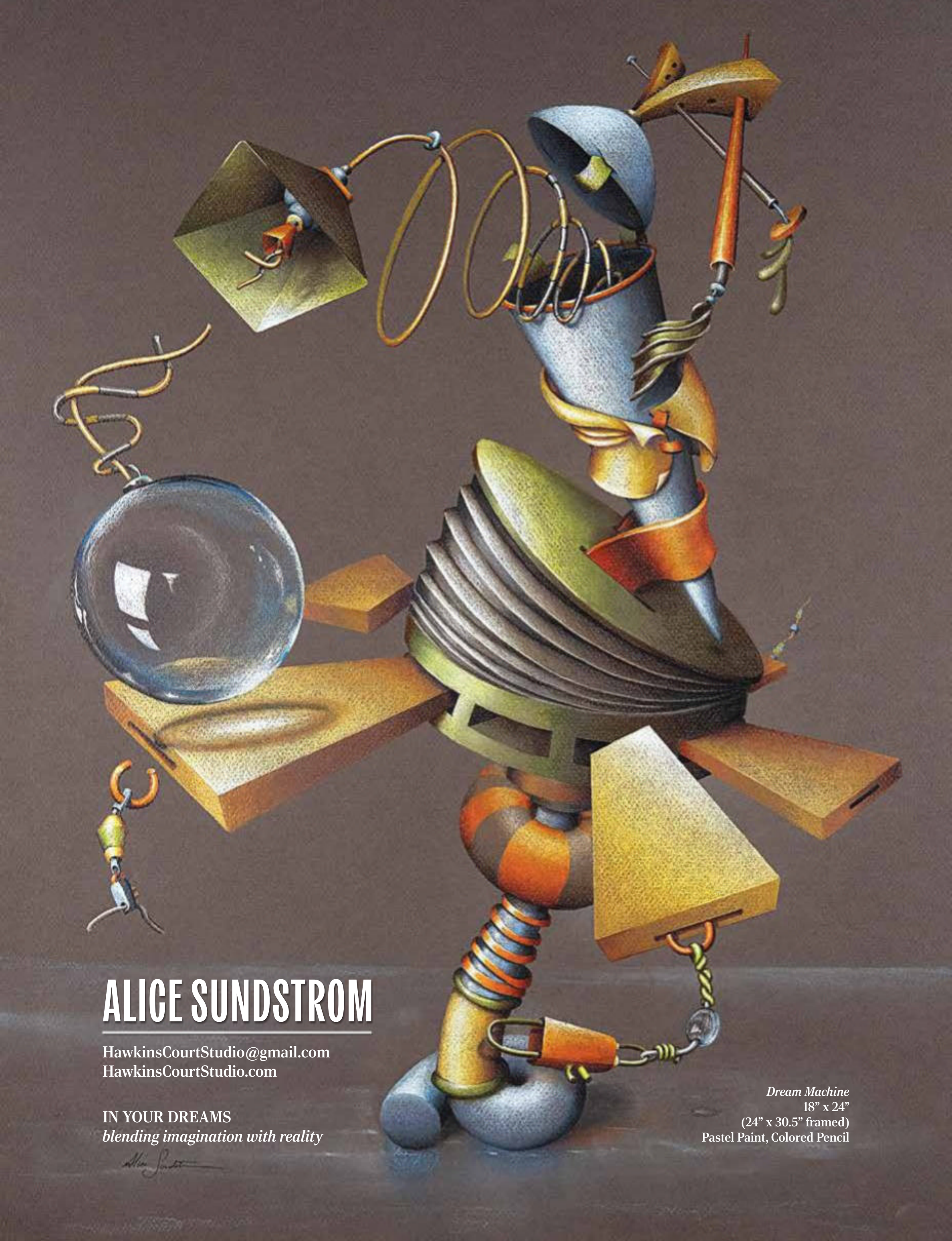

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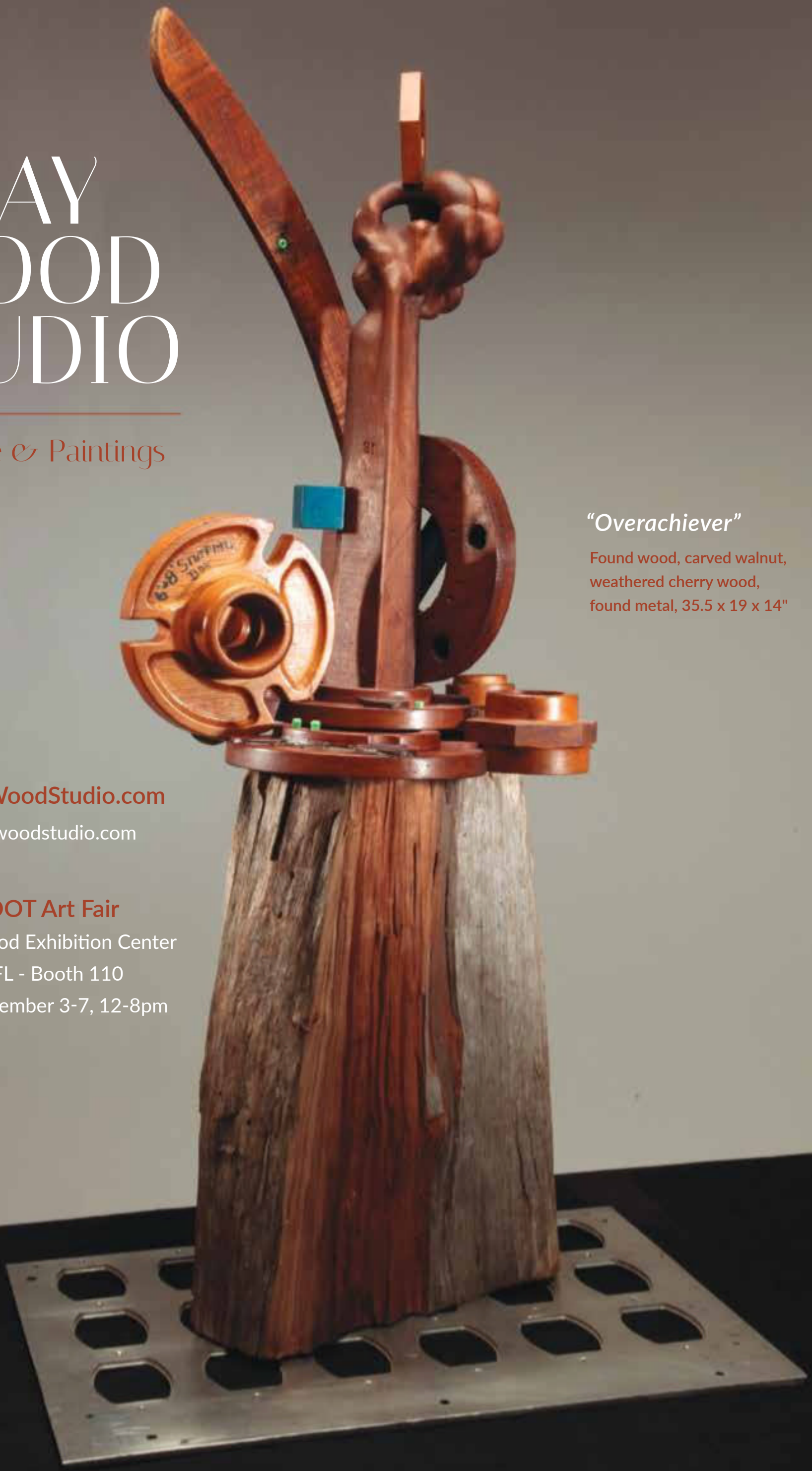

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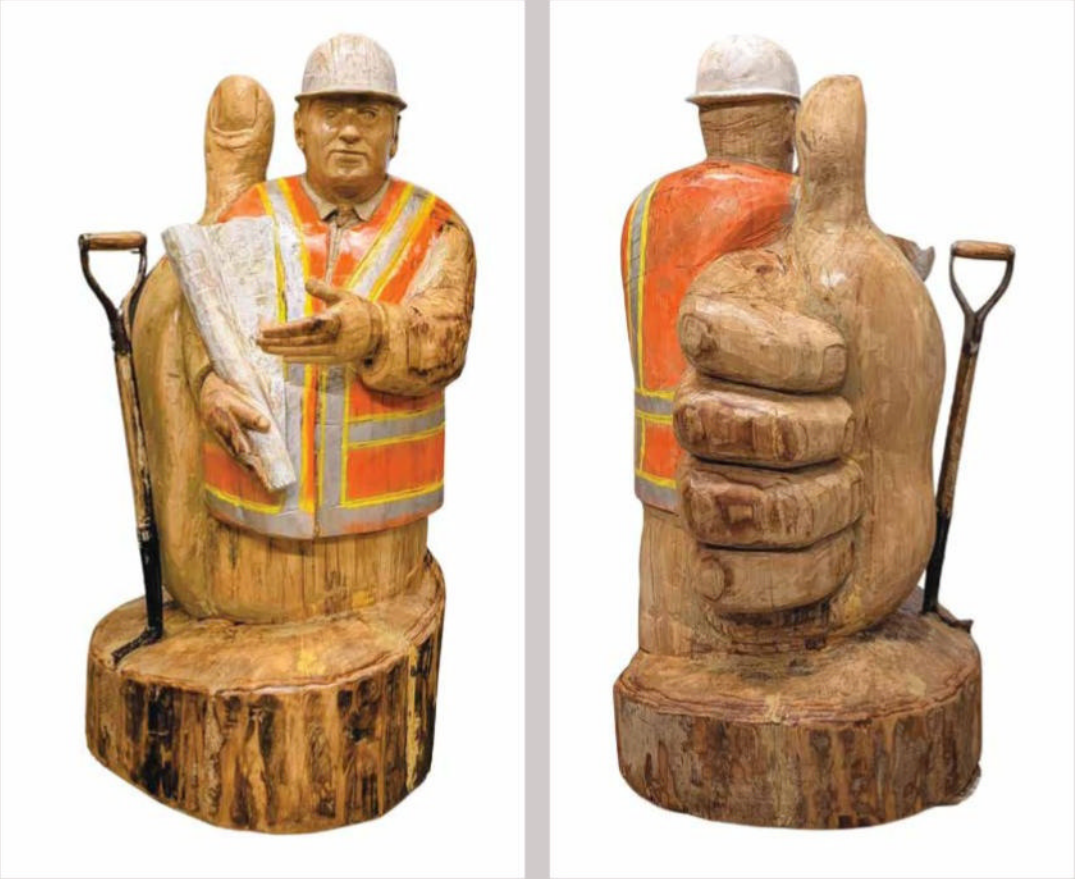

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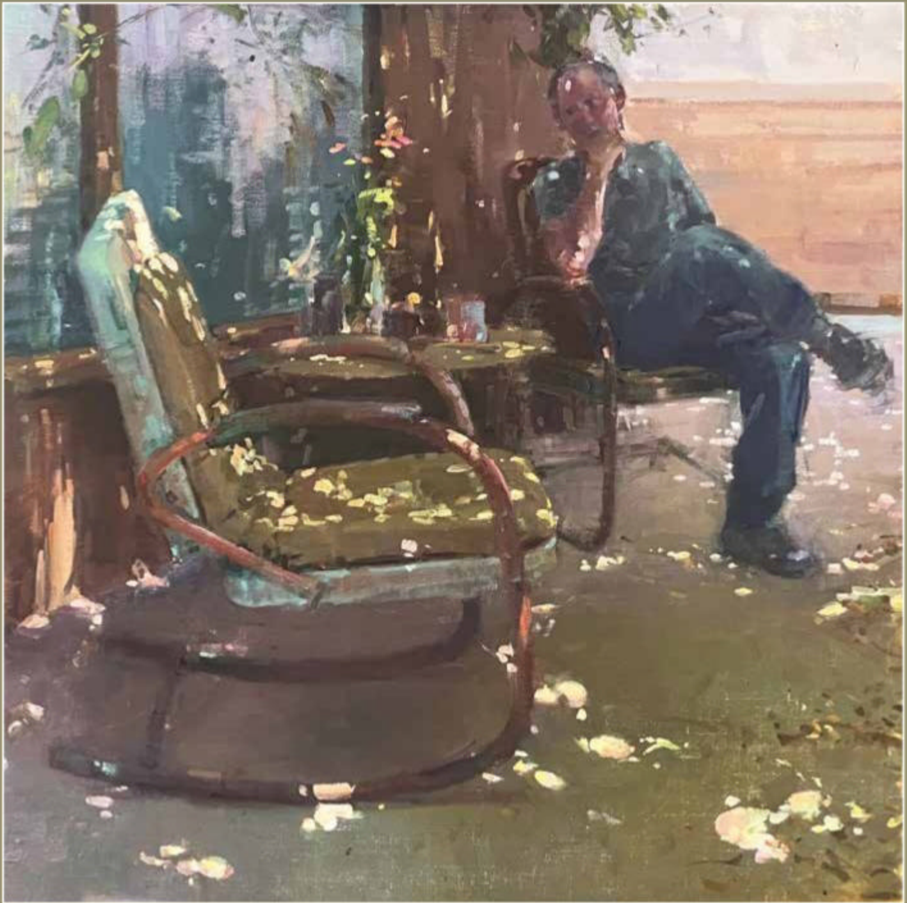
CAROLYN LINDSEY



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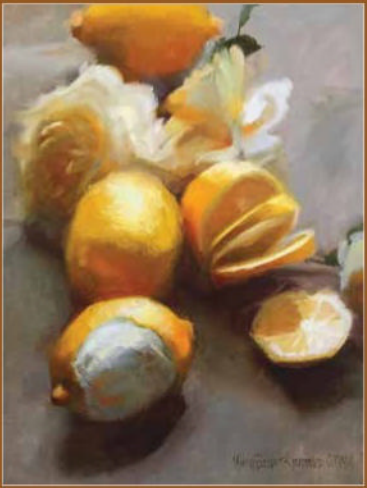
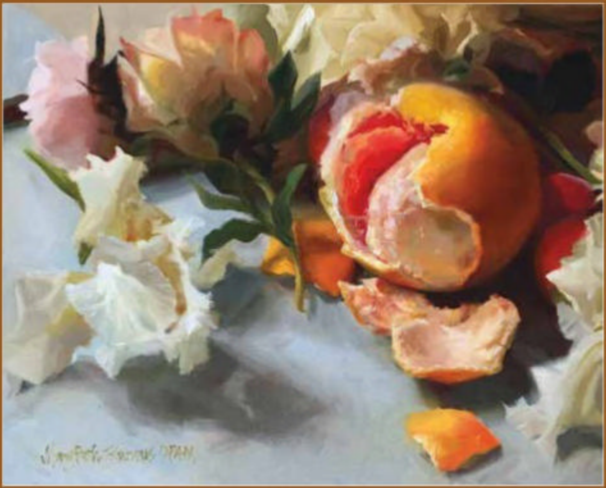
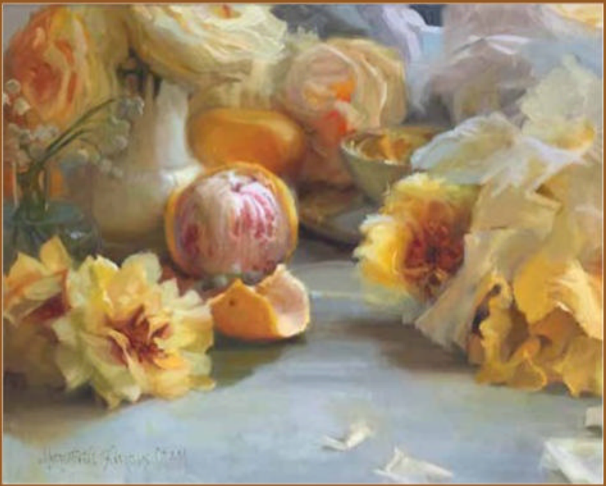


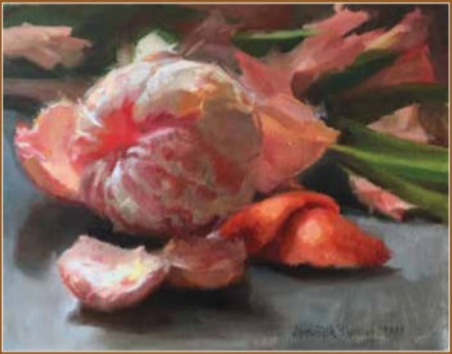
“Lemon Twist”, 16x12in, oil on canvas
1261 Gallery, Denver, CO
Flourishing Through Beauty Exhibition



“Glimmer of Hope”, 16x20in, oil on canvas
Wally Workman Gallery, Austin, TX



“Golden Girls”, 16x20in, oil on canvas



“I’m Blushing”, 11x14in, oil on canvas
1261 Gallery, Denver, CO
Flourishing Through Beauty Exhibition

MaryBeth Karaus, OPAM

www.marybethkaraus.com
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Unveiling

Unveiling showcases recently completed portrait commissions and figurative works by some of the Portrait Society of America's most accomplished and active members. In this month's feature, Kimberly Azzarito, Director of Programs for the Portrait Society of America, speaks with Ying-He Liu about her striking portrait of North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper, as well as the inspiration, challenges and evolving role of portraiture in today's cultural landscape.

A Lasting Legacy in Paint: The Official Portrait of Governor Roy Cooper

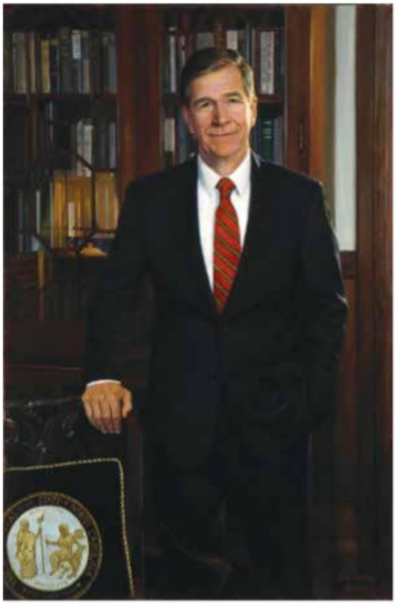
BY KIMBERLY AZZARITO

The commission to paint Governor Roy Cooper's official portrait came through artist Ying-He Liu's long-standing professional connection. Jean Daniel, President of J. Daniel Portraiture & Fine Art in Raleigh, North Carolina, presented a select group of artists to the North Carolina Executive Mansion Fine Arts Commission. After reviewing portfolios and holding discussions, the governor and Mrs. Cooper chose Liu for this significant project.

The setting for the portrait was as important as the subject himself. North Carolina's Governor's Mansion, built during the Civil War period, and now serving as both residence and museum, houses an impressive collection of gubernatorial portraits by celebrated artists such as Daniel E. Greene, John Howard Sanden, Ron Sherr, Michael Shane Neal and John Siebels Walker. Their works set a high standard and serve as inspiration. Liu's task was to create a portrait that would fit within this classic collection while capturing Governor Cooper's individuality.

Governor Cooper selected the mansion's library as the backdrop. He proved an ideal subject: charismatic, poised and comfortable in front of the easel. To enrich the composition, Liu included a chair pillow bearing the North Carolina insignia, as well as the library's bookshelves, which lend both symbolism and visual interest. The deliberate backlighting allows the governor to emerge from the darker background, giving the portrait depth and presence.

Over the years, Liu has been privileged to paint many prominent figures: U.S. Cabinet members, congressional leaders, university presidents, Fortune 500 executives, the founder of a global financial company, among others. Each commission brings its own challenges and rewards, and together they have greatly shaped her artistic journey. The opportunity to create enduring works for such institutions is both humbling and deeply fulfilling.



Ying-He Liu, *Roy Asberry Cooper III, Governor of North Carolina*, oil on linen canvas, 56 x 37 in.

At present, Liu is working on portraits of medical and business leaders. She also looks forward to devoting more time to non-commissioned work and traveling. For decades, commissions have been Liu's primary focus, but returning to personal projects will bring her balance and renewal.

The heart of portraiture lies in balancing likeness with artistry. Some of history's greatest portraits achieve both—a faithful resemblance paired with the intangible qualities that captivate viewers. For Liu, the top priority is always to capture the sitter's likeness, but that does not mean sacrificing artistic merit. The most successful works rely on the artist's ability to weave together composition, lighting, color and character. Often it is the fleeting expressions or subtle gestures, the so-called "happy accidents," that breathe life into the canvas. There is no formula; rather, the artist's eye and sensitivity guide the process, along with a bit of good fortune when the subject possesses natural presence and instinctive grace.

Classic portraiture continues to endure. Its power lies in timelessness: the ability to preserve not only a likeness but also the dignity, presence and narrative of the sitter. That, ultimately, is what makes portraiture worth preserving, and why Governor Cooper's portrait will join the ranks of those that honor the history and spirit of North Carolina. ●

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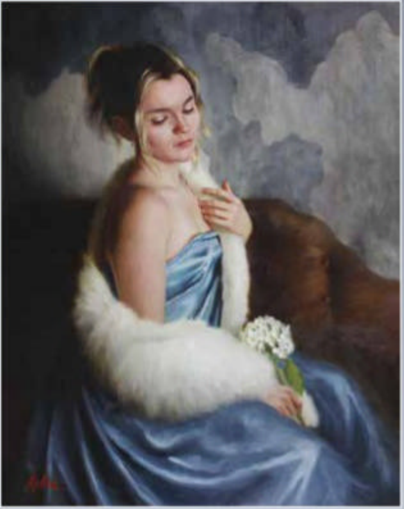

Satin and Fur, Oil, 16x20
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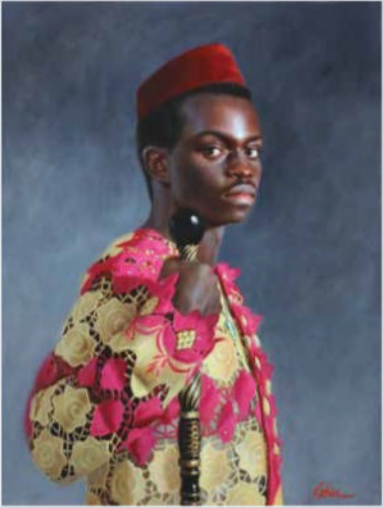

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THE VIRTUOSOS OF THE OPA

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Information: (815) 356-5987, www.oilpaintersofamerica.com

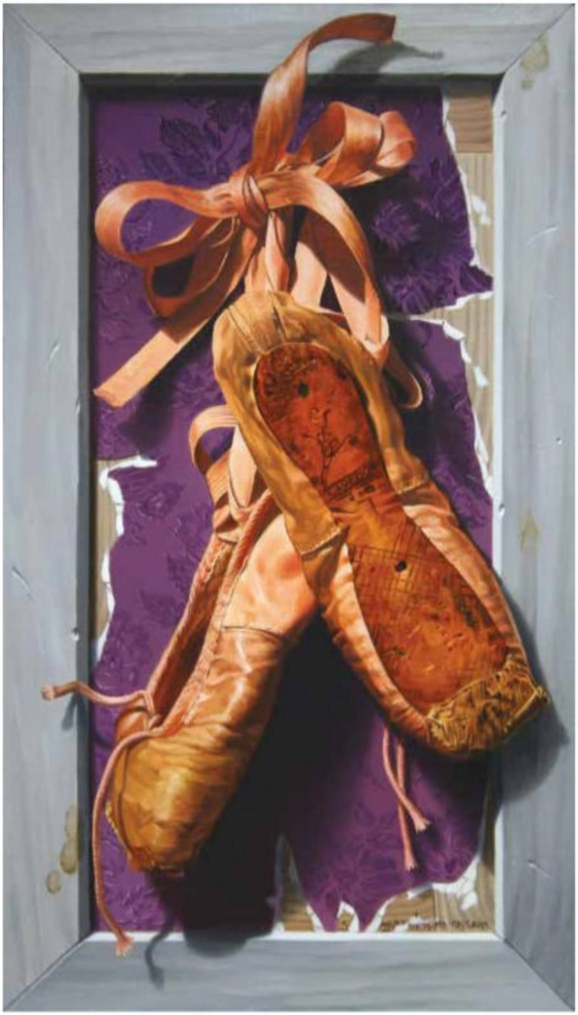
Artistic Maestros

Oil Painters of America hosts an exhibition featuring the finest works by its elite Master Signature and Signature artists.

The artists highlighted in Oil Painters of America's *The Virtuosos of the OPA* show are known as the "best of the best." This prestigious showcase brings together original artworks by the organization's top Master Signature and Signature artists—nationally and internationally acclaimed painters who have undergone a rigorous selection process. Approximately 40 works will be on view by artists like Edward Aldrich, Albert Handell, Michael Situ, Jing Zhao, Aimee Erickson, James E. Tennison, Calvin Liang, Ann Kraft Walker and many more. Acclaimed artist Daniel J. Keys, protégé of master artist Richard Schmid, will serve as this year's Juror of Awards.

Among the superb paintings in the show is a floral still life titled *Dance of the Dahlias*, by OPA Signature artist **MaryBeth Karaus**. The painting depicts a vase of white and deep crimson dahlias in Karaus' painterly hand. "Found at a church fall market, this red and white Chinese vase was quite a find," she says of the piece. "Across the way was a booth selling flowers that complemented the vase perfectly. I wanted it to be dramatic, but lively. This painting celebrates ordinary treasures made luminous."

A painting of a pair of ballet slippers by Master Signature artist **Scott Royston** has also found its way into the 2025 show. "I wanted to make this piece a trompe l'oeil," says the artist. "I added the white frame around the piece along with deep shadows and brilliant highlights, accompanied with some of the elements coming out of the frame to achieve this. I chose the wallpaper for a Victorian flair to go with the color and look of the slippers. I wanted to bring another layer of depth with the ripping of the paper, exposing the immediate wall surface to add interest." The slippers feel as though one could reach out and actually pick them up.



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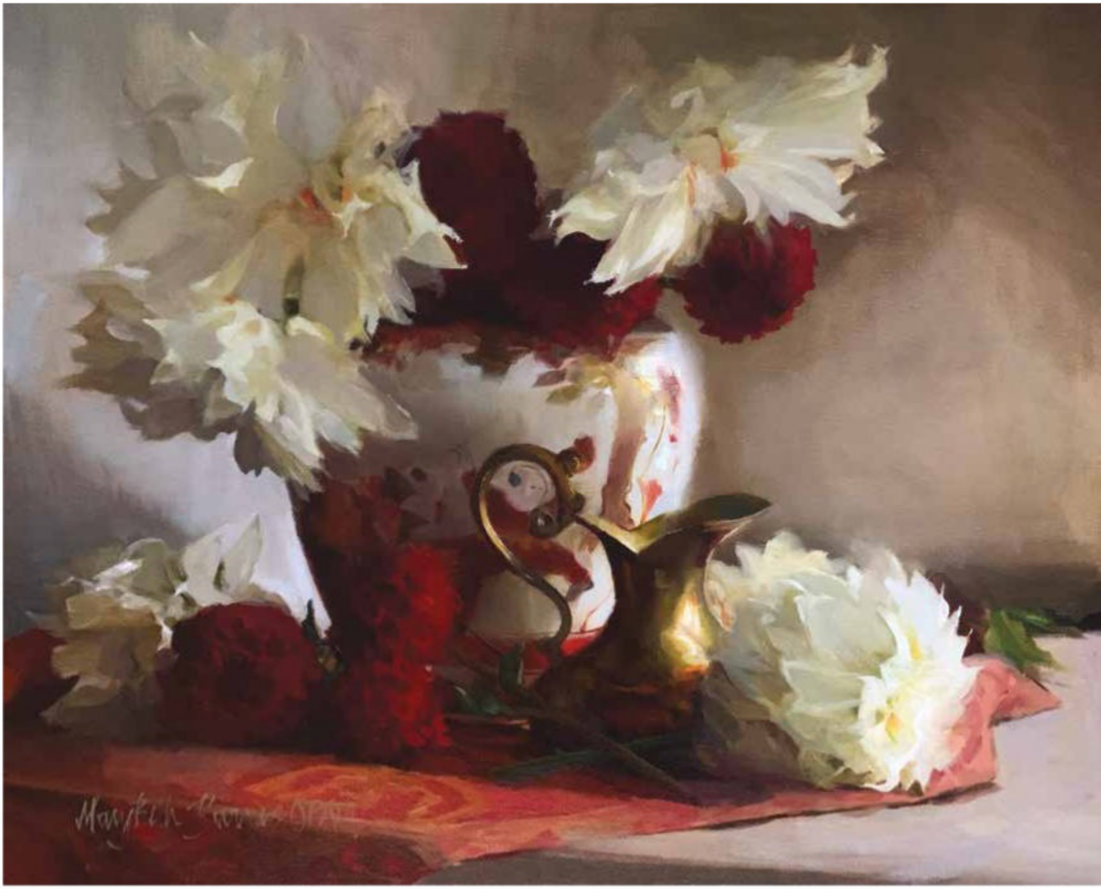

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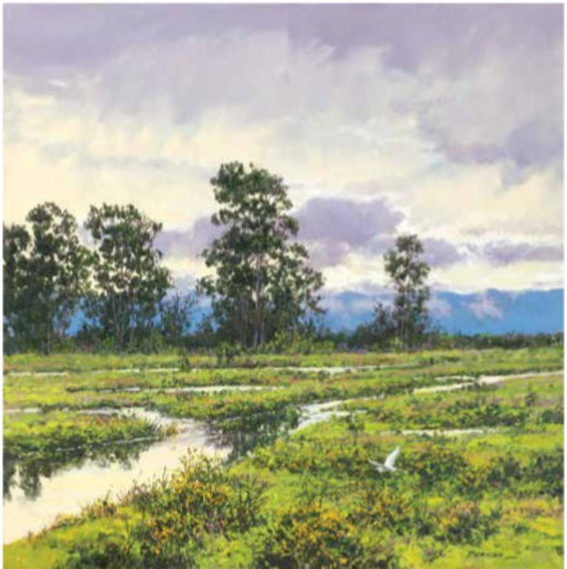

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California-based landscape painter **Davis Perkins**' *High Tide at China Camp* is a square composition of a boggy scene filled with vibrant greens beneath a dramatic sky. "China Camp is near my home in Marin County, California, bordering San Francisco Bay, and home to many egrets. I often paint here in plein air, and this painting is derived from several of those studies," Perkins says. In the lower righthand corner of the painting is a great white egret in flight.

The Virtuosos of the OPA exhibition is on view at Ballard's Fine Art Gallery in Sheridan, Wyoming, through December 15. The gallery is open Thursday through Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. To inquire about available works, contact the gallery at (307) 763-7681 or ballardsfineart@gmail.com. ●

1
Scott Royston, OPAM, *Pointe*, oil on linen panel, 20 x 10 in.

2
MaryBeth Karaus, OPA, *Dance of the Dahlias*, 2025, oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in.

3
Davis Perkins, OPA, *High Tide at China Camp*, oil on canvas, 24 x 24 in.

Field of Dreams

In Frances Featherstone's U.S. debut, Arcadia Contemporary unveils the artist's most stunning work to date.

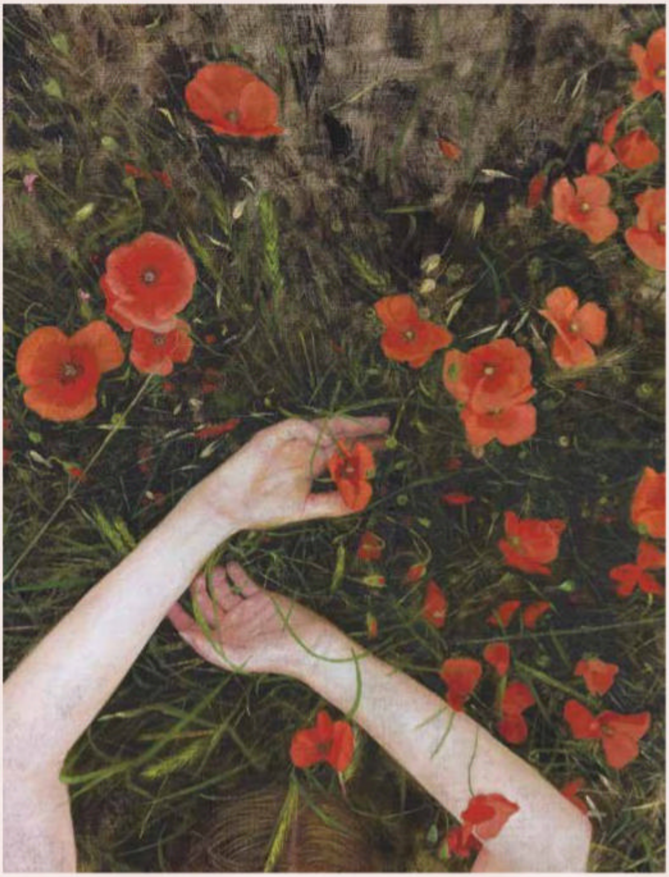
BY SARAH GIANELLI

Creative roots run deep in Frances Featherstone's family tree and her artistic heritage is in full bloom in the British painter's latest body of work.

Featherstone's grandfather was an architect active during the height of modernism, so she developed an appreciation for interiors, exteriors and design from an early age. Her parents, also artists, met in art school. Her mother became a silversmith and noted jewelry designer. She was also passionate about interior design, and was inclined toward bold, clashing colors and patterns. Her father was a furniture designer. "I grew up with an awareness of buildings as works of creative expression, of interior spaces and furniture as choices for how to create the mood and feel of our everyday lives," she says.

In an interview with Angela Adams, an interior design company, Featherstone elaborated on her mother's aesthetic taste. "In the first house I can remember living in, she painted every room a different color, giving it a different warmth and feel. In the second house we lived in, she decorated the house with William Morris wallpaper and curtains. In her current home...she has gone for a luxurious field with opulent fabrics, rugs, paintings and wall colors. If we are formed by the experiences of childhood, I guess this is where my sense and love of color and patterns first came from."

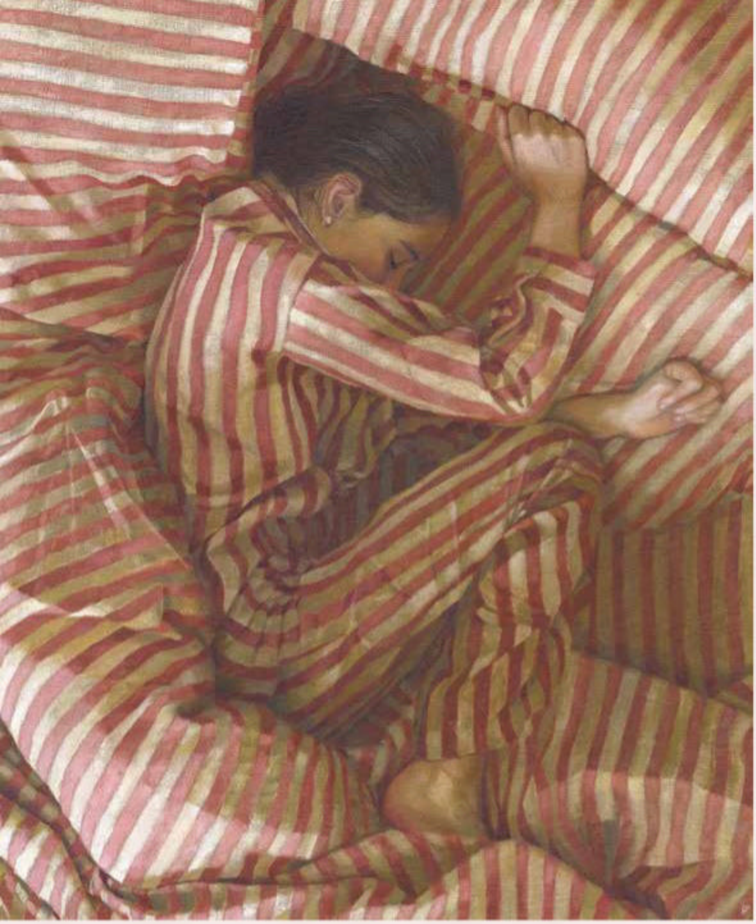
Featherstone's father and architect grandfather were also hobby oil painters and she received her own set of oils when she was 7. Although she always wanted to be an artist and earned an art degree with high honors, upon graduating her resolve to pursue becoming a professional artist waivered. "I thought I couldn't pursue it as a career," she explains. "I saw few role models I felt I could emulate, and painting had fallen out of fashion."



1

1
Field of Dreams, oil on linen, 25½ x 19½ in.

2
A Patchwork of Hopes and Dreams, oil on linen, 31½ x 23½ in.



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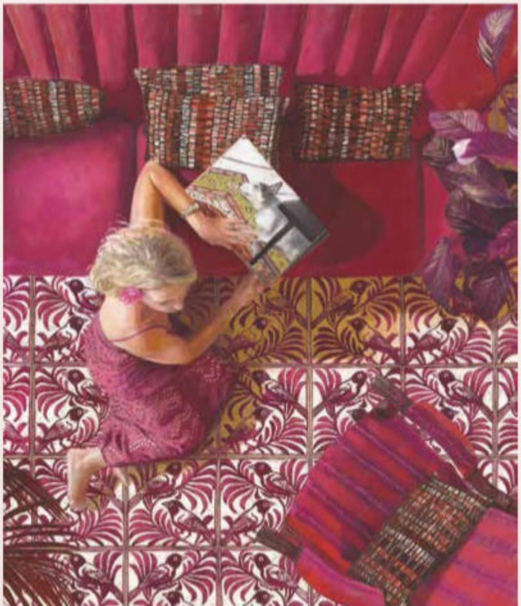

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Featherstone decided on a more "practical" career choice, albeit still creative, and went for a master's degree in interactive media. It led to a job with the BBC, where she worked for decades as a senior designer, an experience she says influenced her way of seeing, honed her eye for composition and design, and helped her understand what drew in, held and moved the eyes of others.

After she had children. Featherstone picked up her brushes and started painting again. Portraits at first. While the figure is still central in her current series, they lack the specificity of portraiture. "When I am painting a specific person I get concerned with achieving precise likeness and less about exploring the universality of the human condition," she explains. "The figure for me has now become a vehicle for the imagination. Mine and the viewer's. It is a vehicle to release thoughts, dreams and stories."

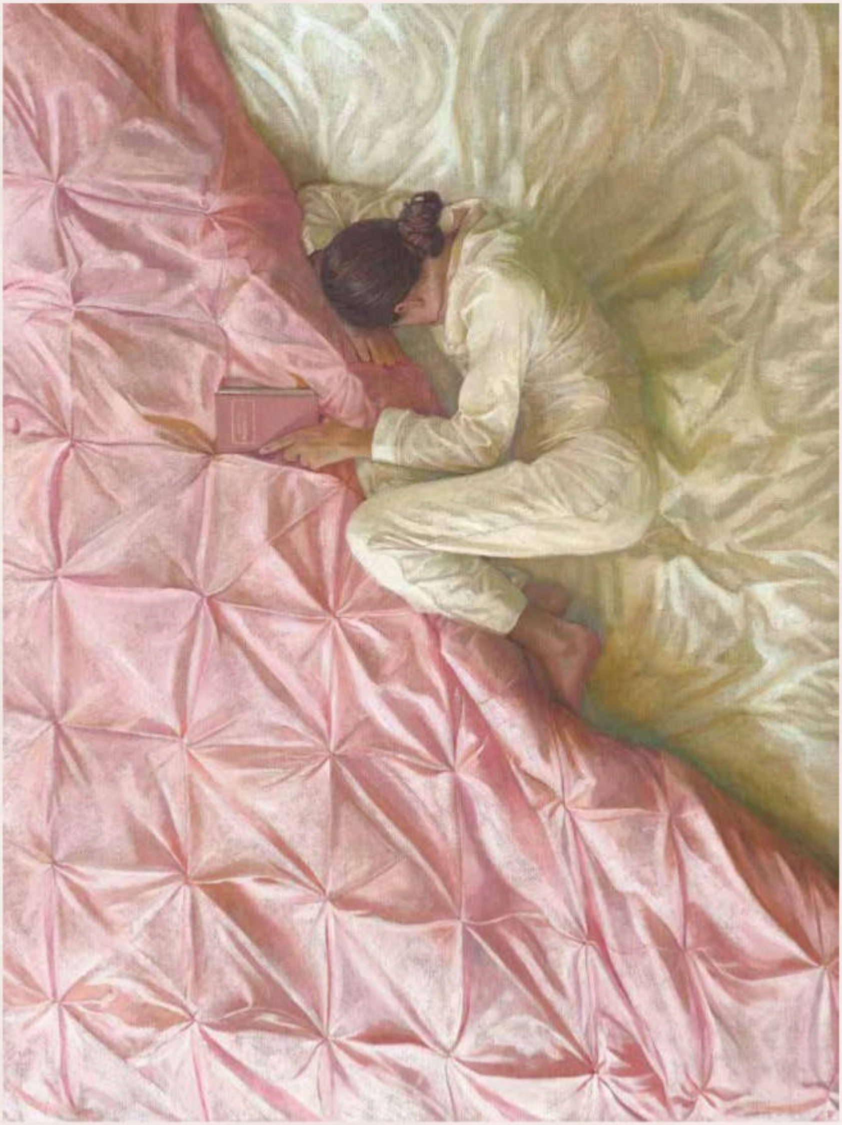
In her latest paintings, the faces of her subjects are obscured, either because they are painted from above or because they are turned into rumpled bedding that, when patterned to match the woman's sleepwear, they almost disappear into.

"I adopted the aerial perspective…so people see themselves or other people in my paintings," Featherstone explains. "For example, in my painting *Fallen Angel* the figure merges in the white linen…and we are left to interpret the story.

"Changing the perspective is also a way of making the ordinary look extraordinary. It is a viewpoint we are not familiar with. It compresses space and makes it seem abstract. It is a way of zooming in and feeling intimate with the scene. Or a way of zooming out like a cartographer might, to give the view used in maps," she continues. "I think people might have that feeling when looking at my paintings." This is why she named these paintings *From the Perspective of the Angels*, a series that will be unveiled in the artist's American debut at Arcadia Contemporary from December 11 through January 10.

For Featherstone, narrative emerges as the painting develops. For example, as the piece *Right Here Waiting*, a fuscia-infused delight of pattern and texture, neared completion, she realized the composition was drawing her eye to the empty chair, rather than the tiles, book or the figure. "These aspects are not always intentional," she says. "I think my most successful paintings are ones that have allowed the narrative to evolve and be open to interpretation."

Influenced by the philosophies of Hegel, Schopenhauer, Kant and Nietzsche, Featherstone's paintings explore key



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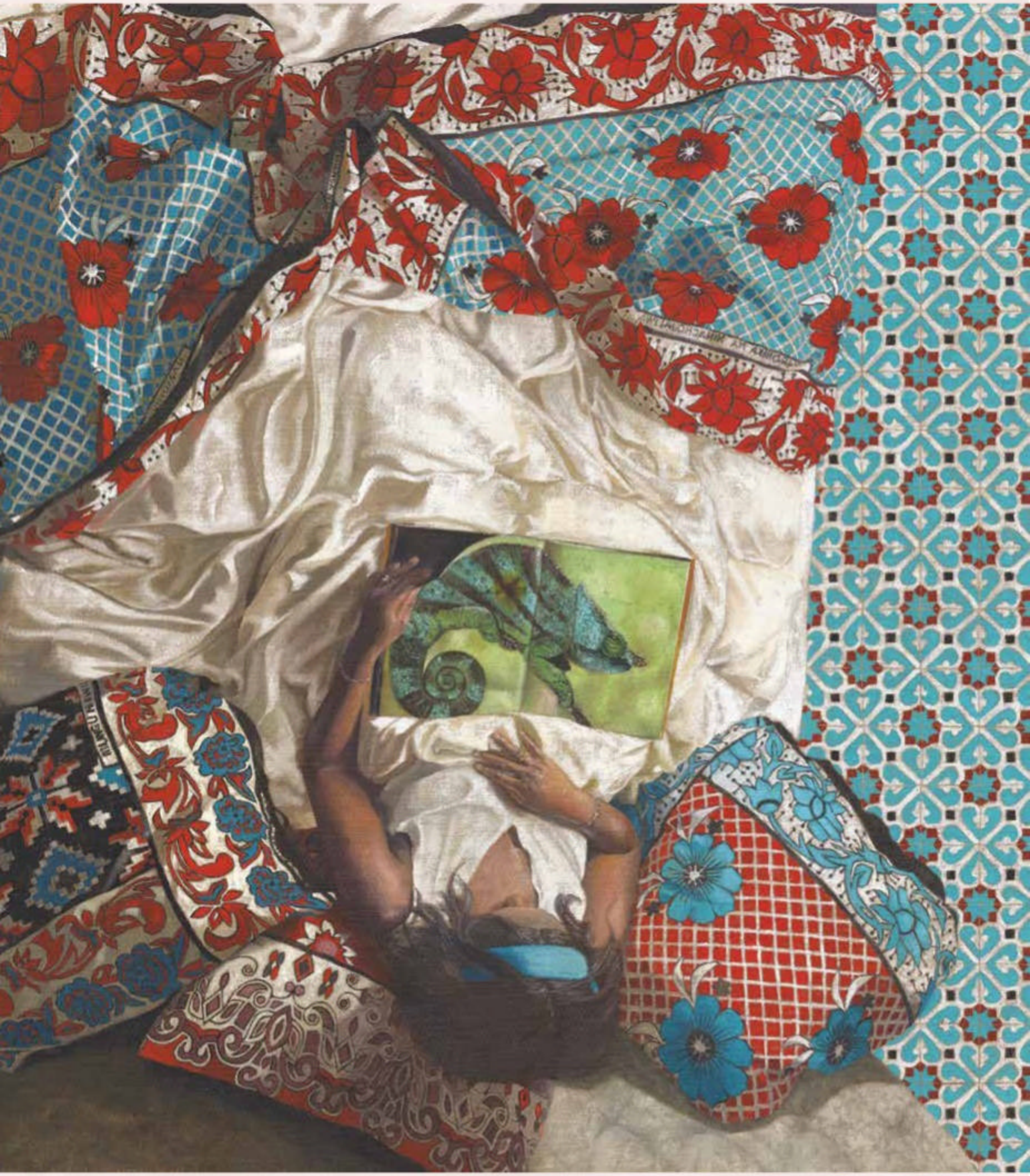
3
Coming out of my Shell, oil on linen, 29½ x 23½ in.

4
Right Here Waiting, oil on linen, 35½ x 31½ in.

5
Fallen Angel, oil on linen, 39½ x 29½ in.

concerns of the German Romanticists: the subconscious, dreams, isolation and solitude, and ask many of the universal existential questions that have preoccupied artists and philosophers in perpetuity. What does it mean to be human? To exist? She points to *Field of Dreams*, which shows a woman's outstretched arms amid a sea of poppies. "I seek to allow the viewer to transport themselves into the painting and into their own memories," she says. "So while identity is key to the painting, and we are up close to the figure, we cannot see their features. This allows a deeper connection to the figure as we can imagine her, and ourselves, lying in the grass lost in contemplation, silent reflection and introspection."

For Featherstone, the presence of poppies, evocative of the Greek myth of Demeter, who created the flower to ease her grief after Hades abducted her daughter Persephone, as well as the dreamy scene in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz,* enhances the sense of tranquility that pervades the piece. "We still use poppies as emblems on tombstones to symbolize the eternal sleep that awaits us all...so there is a pathos and melancholy in the sense that the figure in this painting will be laying in this field of dreams forever."



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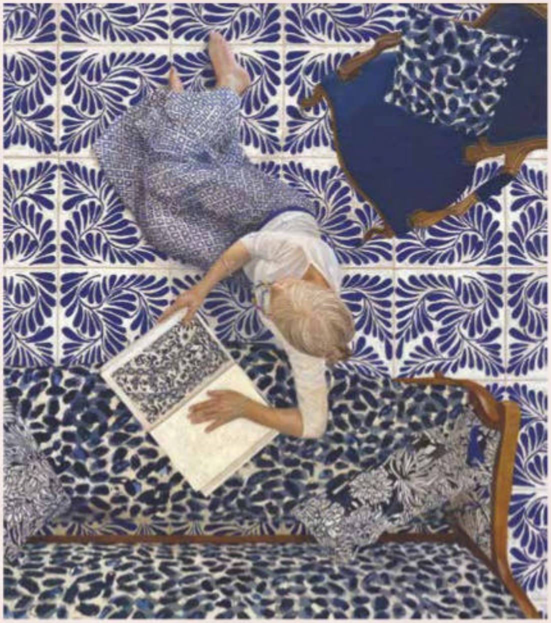

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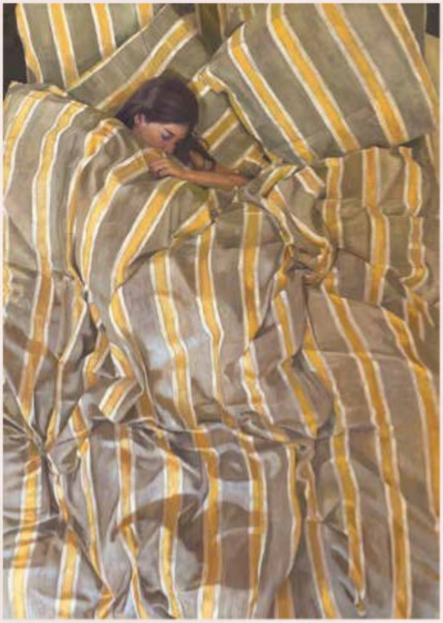

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6
Master of Stillness, oil on linen, 39 x 35½ in.

7
Painting the Town Blue, oil on linen, 35½ x 31½ in.

8
Sunny Side Up, oil on linen, 47 x 33½ in.

In *Field of Dreams*, Featherstone is also trying new avenues to explore the recurring themes in her work by taking her scenes outside of the home and into a natural landscape. Still, most of her new paintings are interiors, often set in the coziness of the bedroom. A quote by Irish novelist Cecelia Ahern—"Home isn't a place, it's a feeling"—resonates with the artist. "In my paintings, I am trying to convey that feeling we all have of being in our personal space," she says. "I believe that when we see interiors they speak to some deep primal part of us that always longs for home. This yearning that as humans we all share, and that connects us no matter whether the interiors are of a palatial bedroom in the desert or a fur-covered ice cave in the Arctic circle. Interiors emanate this sense of feeling safe. Somewhere we don't need to pretend, but where we can be ourselves. Interiors are places where we can venture into our own interior."

Featherstone also visually plays with themes of chaos and order—and how they can coexist and complement one another side by side. We see this especially in works like *Master of Stillness*, where the geometric patterns in the tiles and fabric (a combination of African and Persian designs) are juxtaposed with the tussled sheets and haphazard pillows. "The painting explores the balance between order and what is organic which can be a metaphor for our interior and also out exterior world," she adds.

In *A Patchwork of Hopes And Dreams*, a woman is stretching awake under a pile of quilts, which contain stories in every stitch, of the woman or women who made them, their culture, and often the past. I myself have a quilt created by a circle of my great grandmother and her sisters in the early 1960s. It was made out of their worn dresses from the 40s, the designs in the fabric so clearly from a different time. Featherstone also enjoys painting stripes, as in *Coming out of my Shell*. Like quilts, "there are so many different ways of interpreting them," she says. "Stripes, depending on their color, can signify danger, mischief, or simply being true to oneself.

When pressed about what theme is the main driver of her work, what lies at its core, she lands on solitude. "I see solitude as a gift," says Featherstone, adding that it is a part of her life and also very important to her practice.

"I find painting as a meditation into my own thoughts. It is important to me that I am being true to my own vision of what I want to be and where I want to go. Being alone for such long stretches of time teaches me how strong I am. How much I can achieve by myself. How I should have confidence in my thoughts and ideas and not worry about trying to be interesting, or what others want me to be. I think it is this sense that my work is true to my sense of self that resonates with my viewers. I think there are some thoughts that can only be thought, some places in our minds only discovered, if we are comfortable being alone." ●

FRANCES FEATHERSTONE: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE ANGELS

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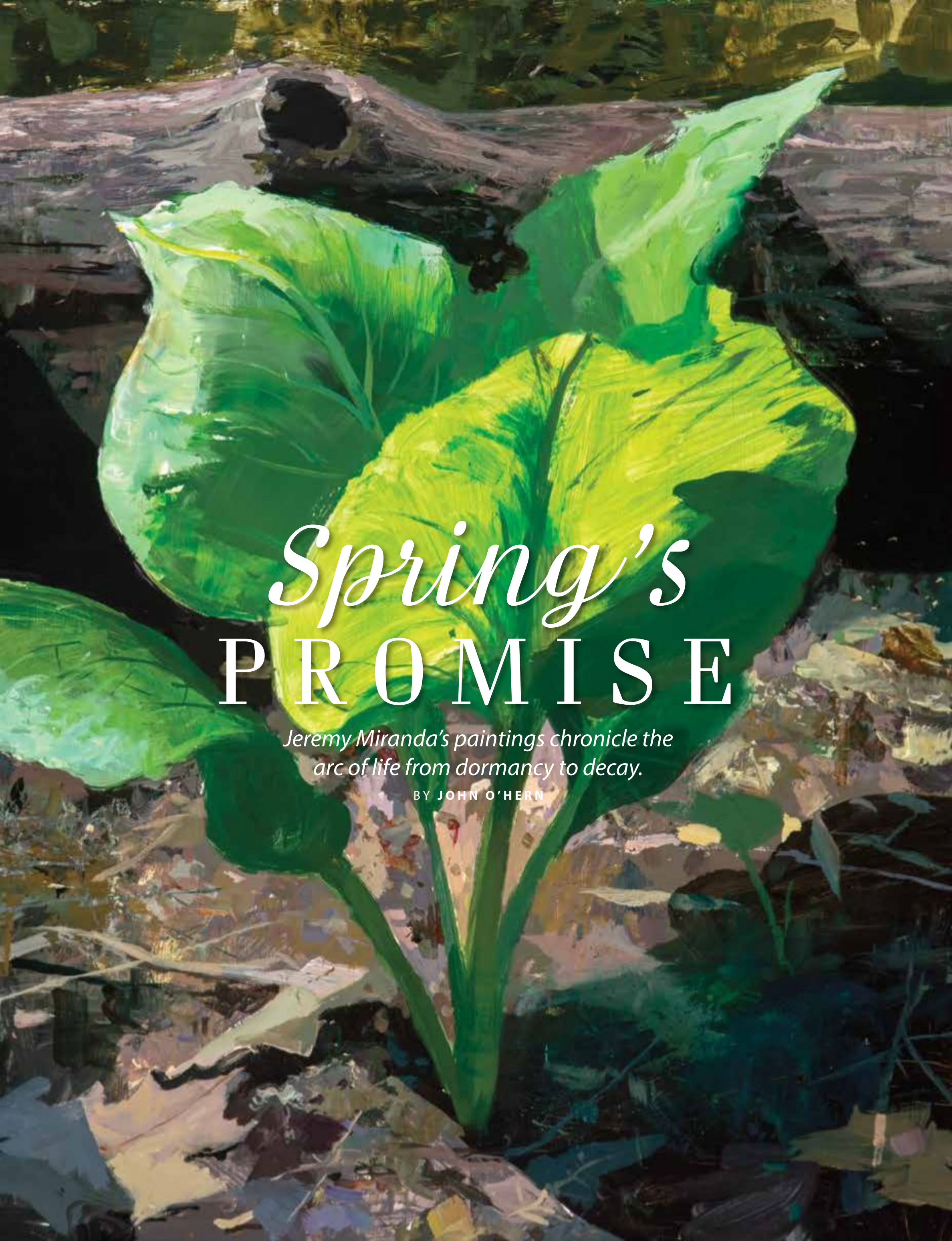


Spring's PROMISE

Jeremy Miranda's paintings chronicle the arc of life from dormancy to decay.

BY **JOHN O'HERN**

2

1
The First Skunk Cabbage, acrylic on panel, 20 x 16 in. Courtesy the artist and Evoke Contemporary, Santa Fe, NM. Photograph by Brett Wiese Saunders.

2
Maine artist Jeremy Miranda painting in plein air.

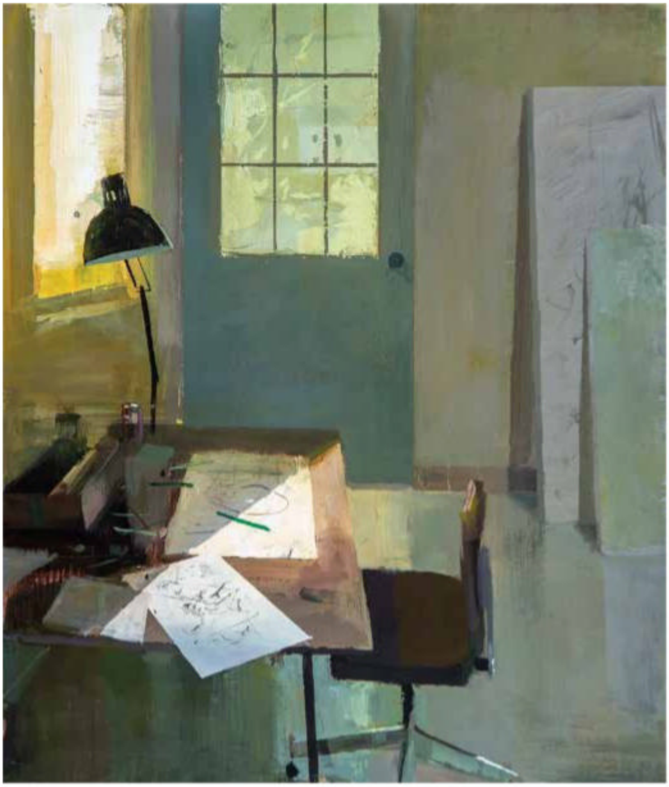
3
End of Day, acrylic on panel, 20 x 17 in. Courtesy the artist and Evoke Contemporary, Santa Fe, NM. Photograph by Brett Wiese Saunders.

One of the first plants to emerge through the snow in marshy areas of the eastern United States is the aptly named symplocarpus foetidus. The fetid odor of its flowers earned its common name, “skunk cabbage.” Its scent attracts pollinators, however, and its appearance is a sure sign of spring.

Jeremy Miranda lives in southern Maine along the Salmon Falls River, bordering New Hampshire. After Maine’s long winter, skunk cabbage is a welcome harbinger. “It’s so green, so ahead of everything,” he says. “There’s a divine energy to the stained glass effect of the sunlight shining through its leaves in contrast to the context of its surroundings.”

Miranda’s still life paintings often feature the plants that his wife, painter Michelle Morin, grows in their garden. His studio window frames a view of the garden as it comes to life in the spring and dies back at the end of the growing season. Morin places vases of cut flowers throughout their home that also progress from firm lushness to a soft, wilted sensuousness. “Michelle grows the plants from seed,” he explains. “She has the knowledge. I’m more of the labor end. In late winter the whole garden exists in miniature in the house.” *Future Island* depicts the nascent garden emerging under a grow light.

There is a wildness to the garden when



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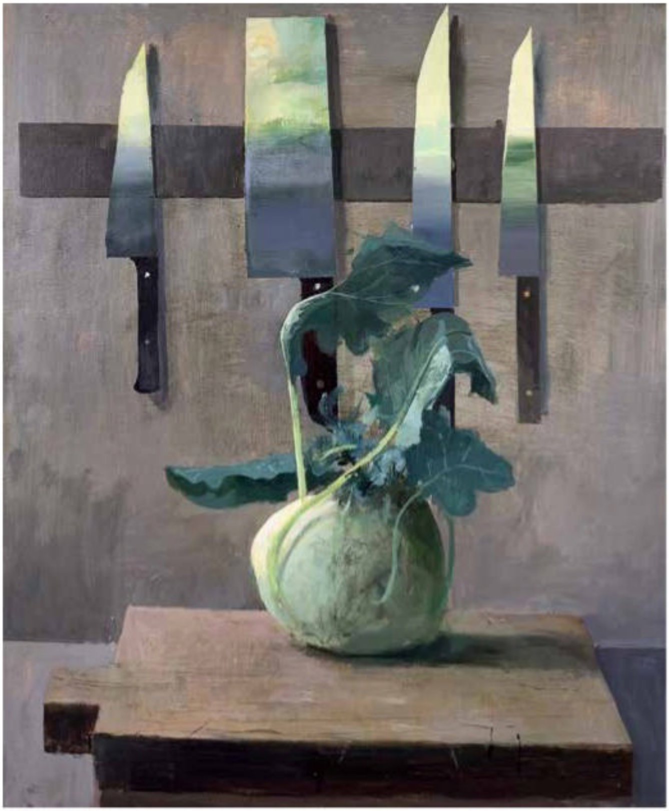
it is in full bloom. About *Electric Garden Summer Hum,* Miranda comments, "The rigidity of the casement window in my studio frames this wildness. It's kind of a dance happening." He mentions how the French post-impressionist painter Pierre Bonnard was fascinated by how a window frames a view and a painting itself is a window.

Through the window he sees not only the shifts of green through the seasons and the colors of August when he says "the volume gets turned up," but also the wildlife—deer, wild turkeys and birds that the garden attracts.

Amaranth seedlings provide a punch of color in *Future Island* and appear in full fettle in *Electric Garden Summer Hum*. One of Morin's bouquets appears past its prime in *Collected Color*, some blossoms dried and the amaranth wilted into soft mushiness but maintaining its expressive color.

The garden at night has its own subtle beauty, which he paints in *A Part of the World Not Yet Broken*. "It's a painting about a certain kind of light," he says. "It's more about darkness and what happens to all the color in the dark. There's not a lot of contrast. I'm not in the pursuit of accuracy but, rather, the weirdness of the night. You can almost hear it. It's a sensory moment beyond the visual."



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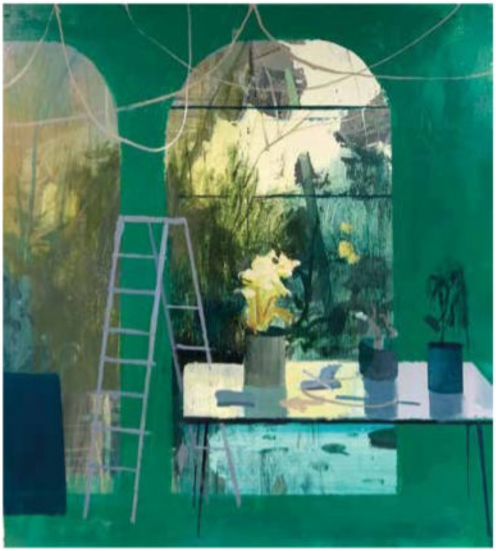

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He observes not only the changes in color and form of the garden and Morin's bouquets but the way sunlight pours through the windows of his home and studio at different times of the day and year—defining objects. In *End of Day*, the light angles across his desk and is almost blinding on the wall while a Bonnard-like view appears through the glass panes of the door. Miranda says, "My preoccupation with light revolves around how it creates and defines space. The shifting light changes space. It illuminates your experience of the world and the experience of shapes working together. I'm interested in the spaces and don't include figures. I want the viewer to be the figure and I'm interested in how you feel in it. A shaft of light migrating around a room is endlessly fascinating."

He is, perhaps, less interested in the thing he represents than the way light behaves. When I spoke with him last

4
Approach With Fierce Grace, acrylic on panel, 24 x 20 in. Courtesy the artist.

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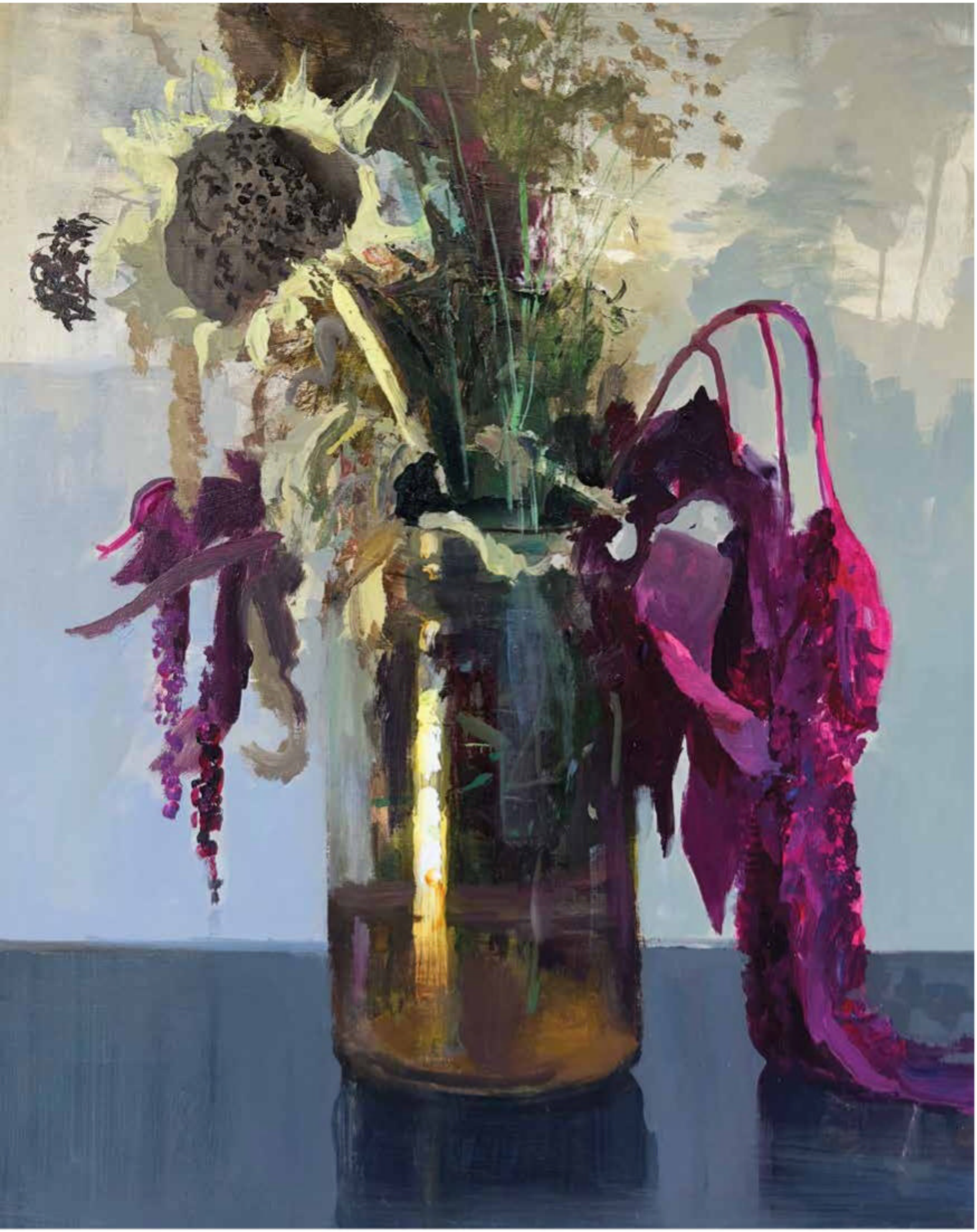
Minus World 12/ Bathhouse, acrylic on panel, 18 x 12 in. Courtesy the artist and Dianna Witte Gallery, Toronto, ON.

6
Collected Color, acrylic on panel, 20 x 16 in. Courtesy the artist.



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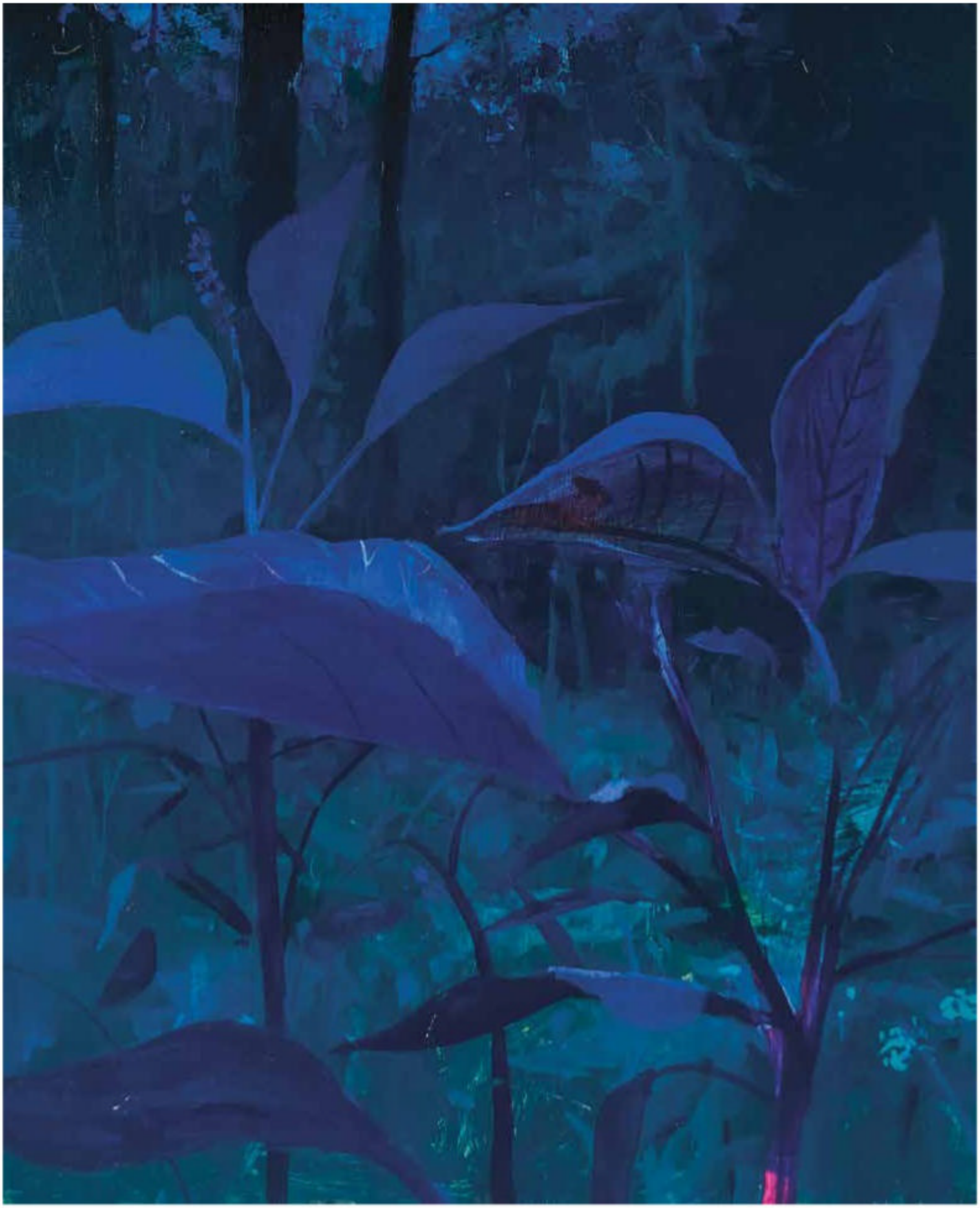

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year for the first of my regular online "Looking and Seeing" essays for Evoke Contemporary in Santa Fe, he said his paintings are "an attempt to capture brief run-ins with the sublime that are buried in the everyday...The work is, in a way, an attempt to slow the world down and experience it with all the senses on a level that sort of feels otherworldly."

I also quoted Camille Pissarro who wrote, "Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble places where other people see nothing." A few years earlier, Thoreau had commented, "The question is not what you look at, but what you see."

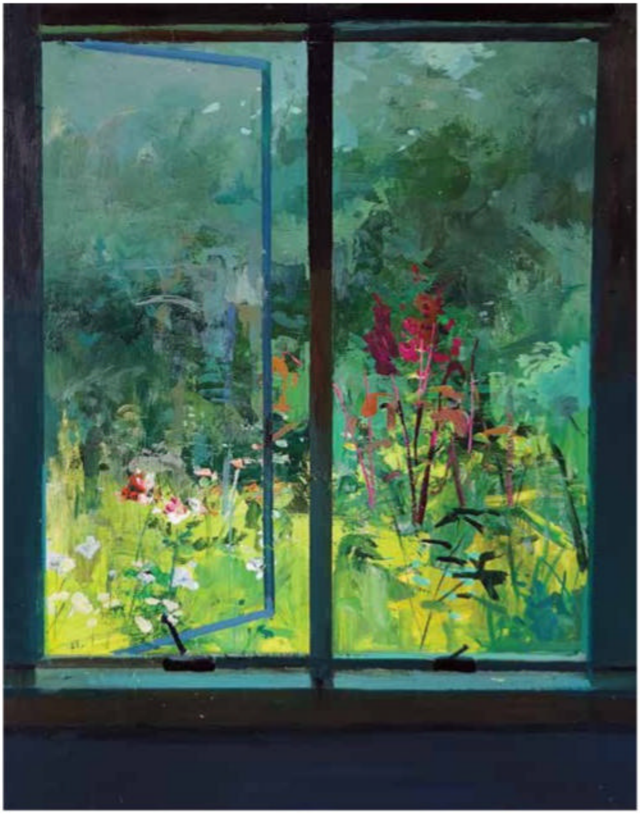
Fascinated by the decaying bouquet in *Collected Color* descending into a nearly amorphous state, he experiments with depth and precision in *Approach with Fierce Grace*. "I was playing with space, wondering how shallow a depth of field I could get and still have a sense of space. The knives reflect the world behind you. It's a painting about sound and texture and tenderness, cold sharp precision and alchemy."

From time to time he goes beyond his 20-by-18-inch panels and paints with acrylic on a canvas that's 50 by 42 inches, as in *False Refuge*. "It's so different in terms of brush movement, using your shoulder rather than the wrist," he explains. "It's a different use of the body. Certain images need to take up your entire vision. It could have been even larger. It's related to *A Part of the World Not Yet Broken*, focusing on lower contrast. It's about more subtlety and a relaxed atmosphere, sacrificing excitement. Visually, it gives a nice environment with a few little chips of light."

He explains that he uses acrylic "because I require so much editing. I don't know it until I see it."

Minus World 12/Bathhouse is part of a series the intention of which "is to create an opportunity to be as intuitive as possible and paint leaving things up to chance. They're about spaces and environments and get away from the work I do on a daily basis where things are grounded in reality. I need this as an excuse to experiment and not be in control. My daily work resists pure experimentation. I find myself doing this kind of work after a long stretch of painting depictions. But they feed off each other."

He continues, "I oftentimes feel I'm using too many words—crowding a painting with too much information. What constitutes a readable image? What can I get rid of and still maintain the feeling? The best moments are when it feels like you shepherd this thing into existence, shepherding this moment that hangs between intention and surprise. If it's not rooted in play it starts to become one-dimensional, and if it's only intentional you lose a sense of wonder. You have to leave enough space for accident. In my more grounded work I can be timid about the level of abstraction. I think I'm going after ambiguity, not abstraction. Ambiguity allows people to have their own experience with things which, I think, is a weird way of replicating the artists experience of the mystery behind the every day." ●



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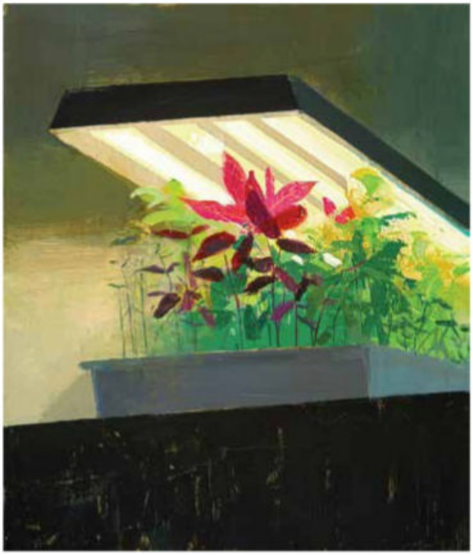

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A Part of the World Not Yet Broken, acrylic on panel, 24 x 20 in. Courtesy the artist.

8
Electric Summer Garden Hum. acrylic on panel, 20 x 16 in. Courtesy the artist.

9
Future Island, acrylic on panel, 20 x 17 in. Courtesy the Artist and Evoke Contemporary, Santa Fe, NM. Photograph by Brett Wiese Saunders.

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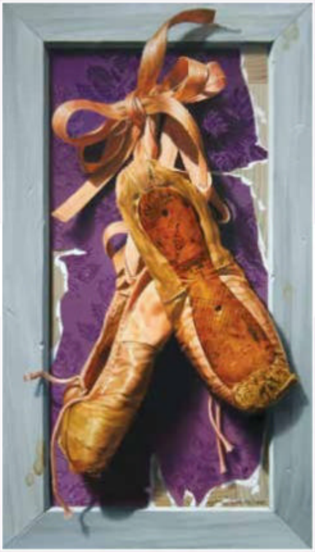

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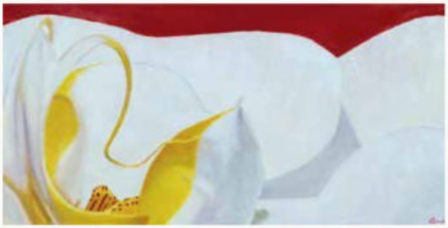

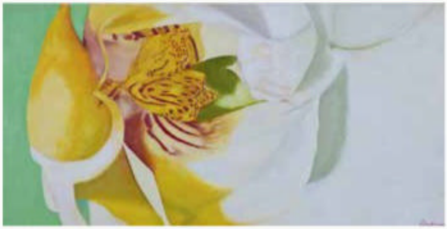

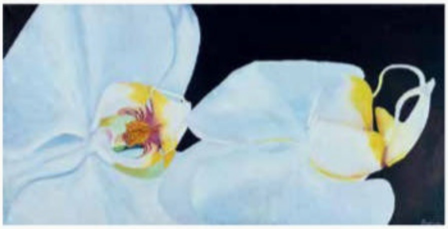

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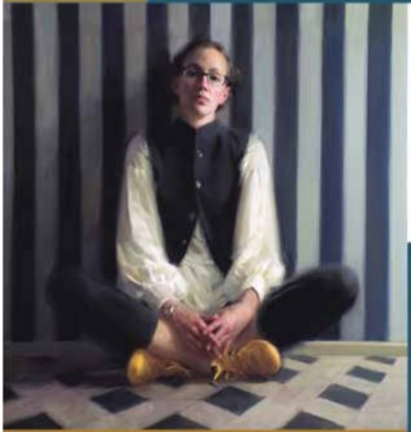

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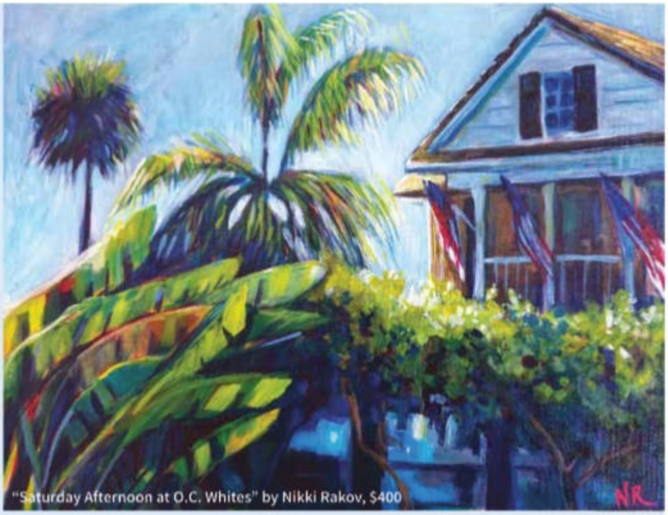

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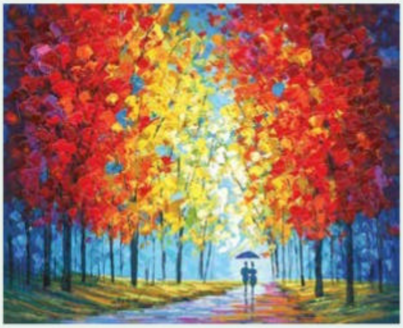

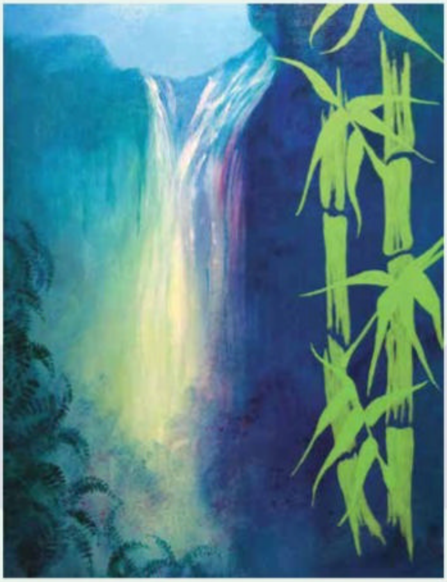

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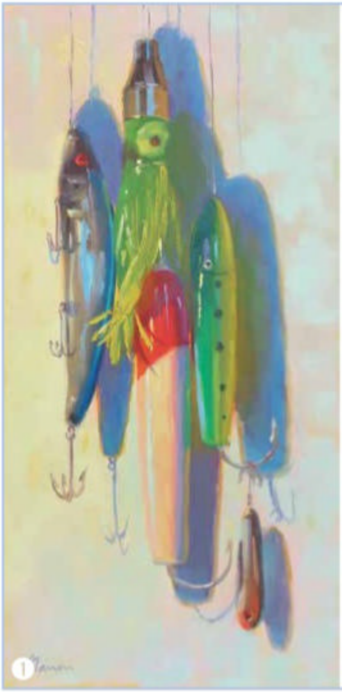

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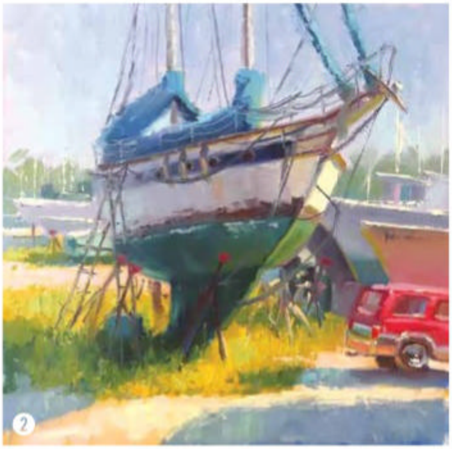

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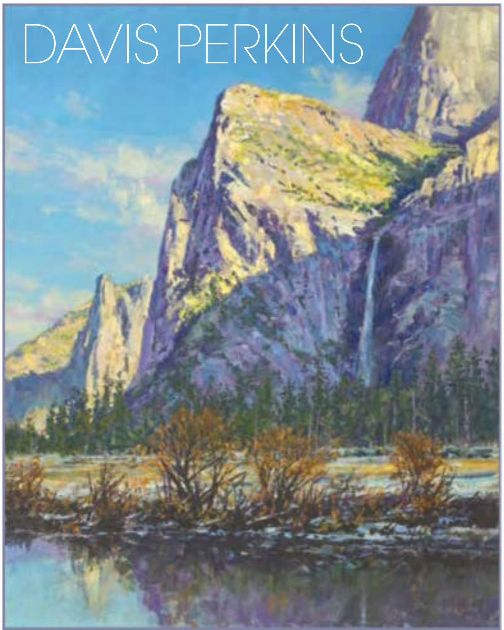

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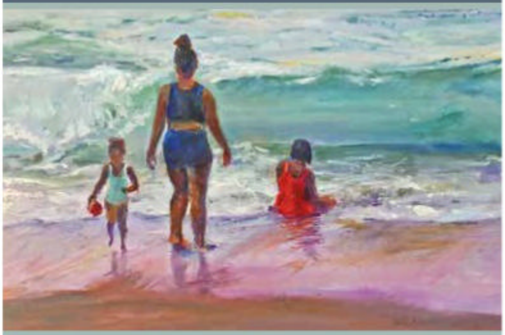

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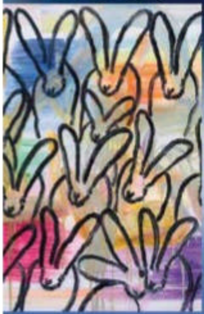

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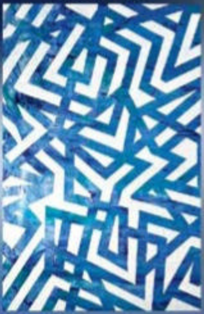

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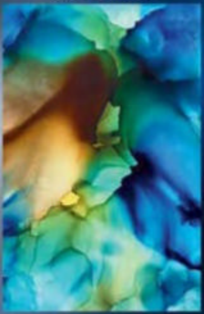

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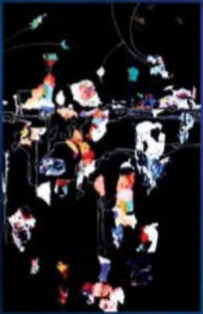

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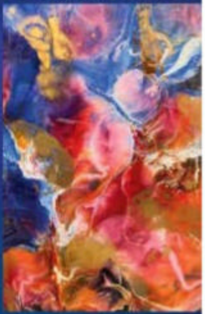

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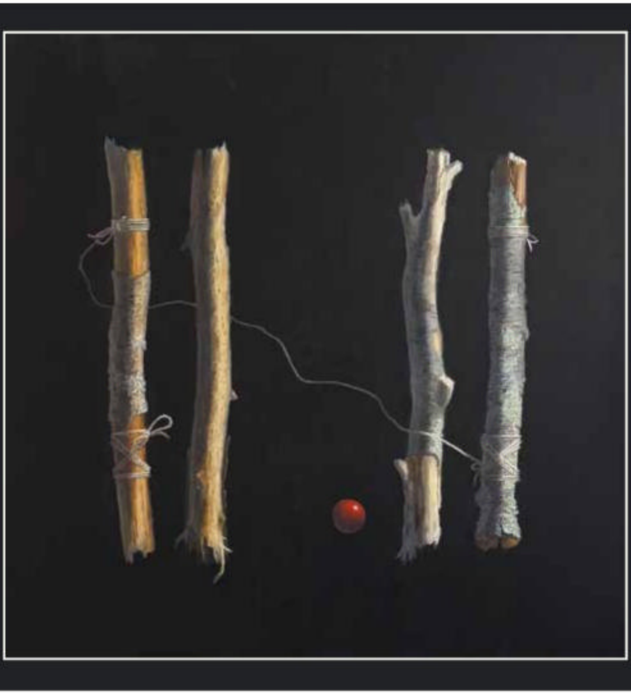

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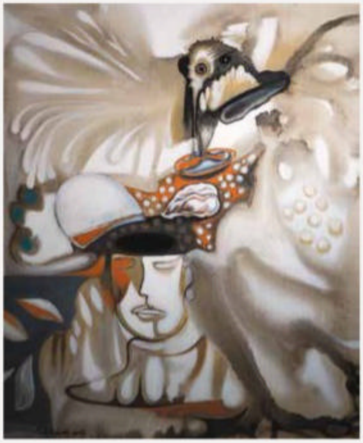

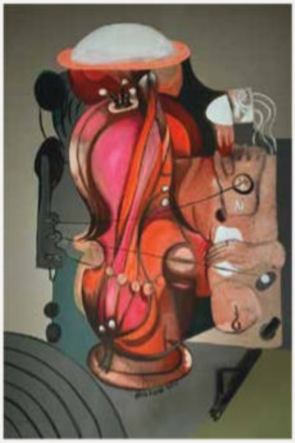

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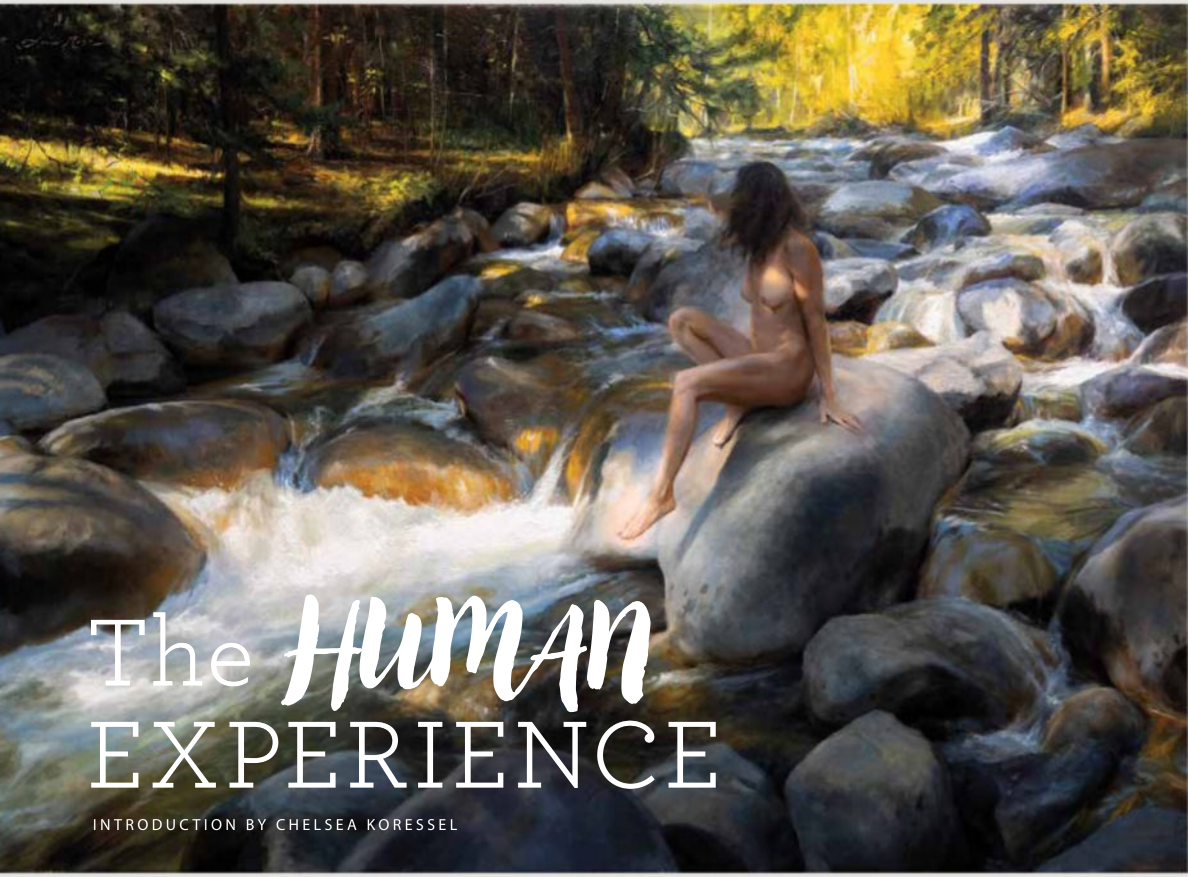

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INTRODUCTION BY CHELSEA KORESSEL

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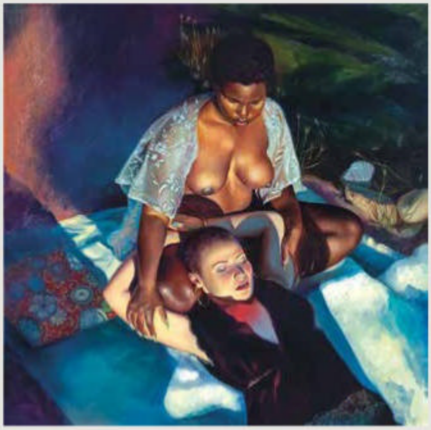
Most artists that dedicate their careers to painting figurative subjects are not just captivated by the human figure alone. More often, it's about the deeper connotations, as is the case for artist Anna Rose Bain, who is fascinated by the "quiet language of carriage and expression, and the way a person's inner life can be conveyed through their physical presence."

Figurative artists often place their subjects in surroundings that speak to broader topics, themes or stories—extracting as much meaning and understanding as they can from the greater human experience.

"After moving to Colorado in 2015, the landscape became an active part of [my] exploration," Bain continues. "I wanted my figures to feel integrated with nature, not simply placed within it, but *belonging to* it. Because I paint outdoors as often as possible, these figures in the landscape often feel like indirect self-portraits—a reflection of my own joy in the open air and my desire for connection and groundedness."

Bain's painting *River Spirit* was modeled by a dear friend during a time of vulnerability and transformation, and the artist sought to convey that sense of openness and renewal. "In this piece, the figure and the river are intertwined, suggesting that we are shaped by the places that hold us," she says. "And, like the dappled light moving across the figure, there is clarity and resilience in our ever-changing circumstances."

Depictions of the nude figure in particular can also lead to conversations surrounding body image—how we see ourselves in context to others. Artist Zienna Brunsted Stewart shares that when she and her mother were living in an ashram, she felt there was a backward sensibility about the body and its beauty. "There was so much emphasis on transcending the physical and honoring the things that are natural about your body, but there were also things that were shameful, like a woman's period, which was considered dirty," she



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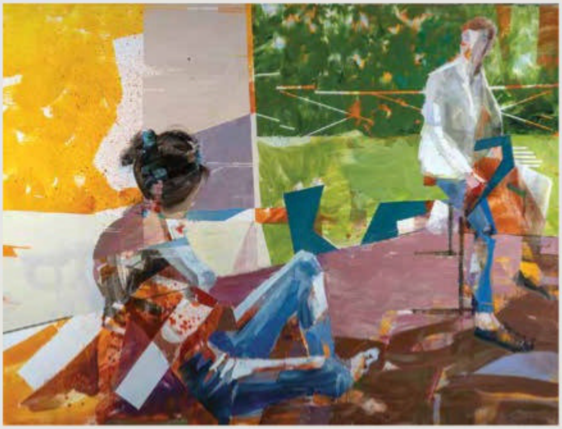

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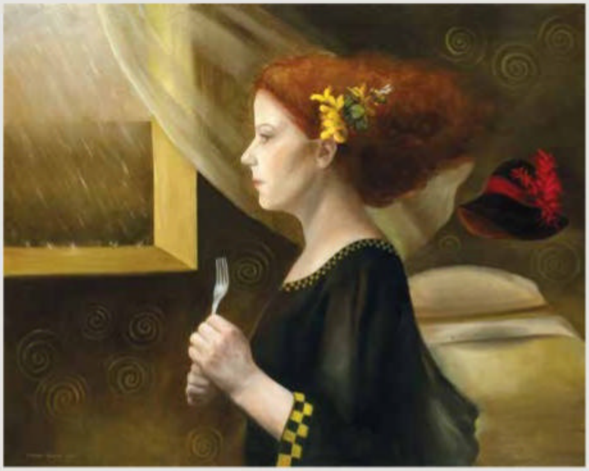

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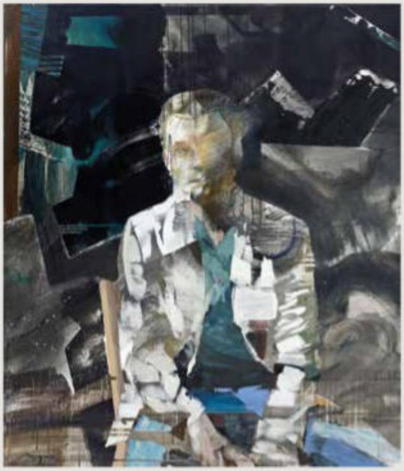

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1. **Anna Rose Blain**, *River Spirit*, oil on linen, 36 x 50 in. 2. **Zienna Brunsted Stewart**, *Eclipsed*, oil on cradled panel, 20 x 20 in. 3. **Gallery MAR Carmel**, *Cadence of C*, oil on canvas, 55 x 72½ in., by Michael Azgour. 4. **RJD Gallery**, *Rainfall*, oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in., by Andrea Kowch. 5. **Gallery MAR Carmel**, *Eugeniusz*, oil on canvas, 55 x 47 in., by Michael Azgour.

says. "I just didn't agree with that and felt that our bodies should be embraced."

Brunsted Stewart is known for her intimate nude depictions and has been praised for painting different kinds of women. In pieces like *Eclipsed*, we see two females of different races during the last moments of a sunset. "I like to paint all different kinds of people," Stewart says. "The human body is meant to be celebrated."

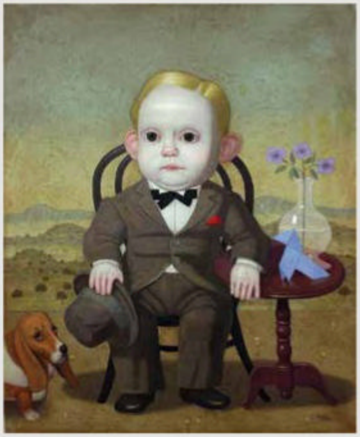
Whatever the reason an artist chooses to focus on the human figure, our world is graced with an array of spectacular figurative examples that continue to teach, enlighten or simply provide a bit of joy and beauty.

Continue reading through this section dedicated to figurative art to hear more insights from artists working in the genre and the galleries that represent them.

The figurative artists at **RJD Gallery** draw deeply from the inner landscapes of human experience, creating narratives that feel both intimate and universal. In Andrea Kowch's work, the figure becomes a vessel for emotional atmosphere—her women exist at the threshold between the real and the surreal, where weather, nature and domestic interiors mirror the complexities of the inner self. Andrei Zadorine brings a poetic stillness to his figurative scenes, often capturing children who appear wise beyond their years. His subjects hold symbolic objects with a quiet dignity, inviting us to revisit the fragility and wonder of childhood. In the whimsical world of Juan Béjar, innocence and elegance meet. His figures possess a gentle theatricality—small in scale yet rich in personality and tenderness.

"Across each of these artists, the figure is not merely depicted; it is revealed," says Richard Demato, gallery owner. "Their works remind us that the human presence in art has the power to anchor a story, stir empathy and speak to something in us that is timeless."

Demato continues, "When you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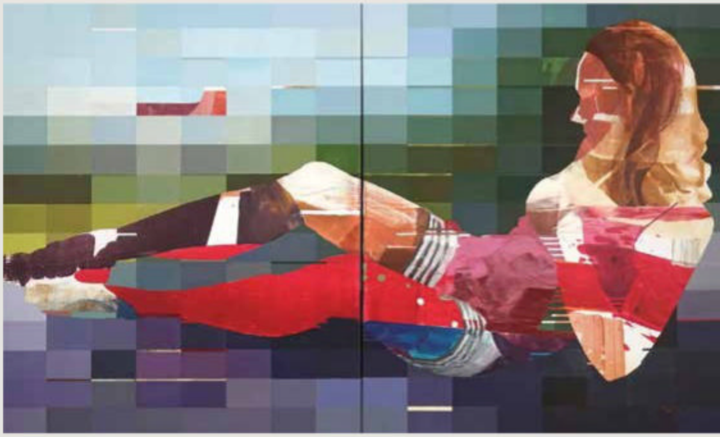
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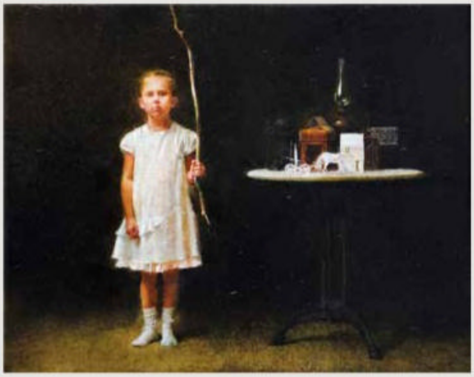
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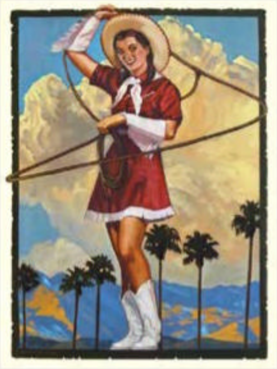
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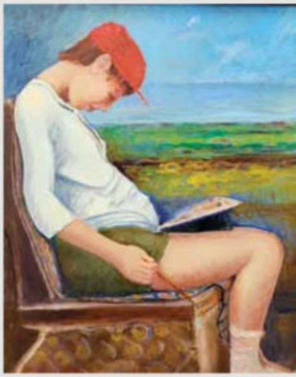
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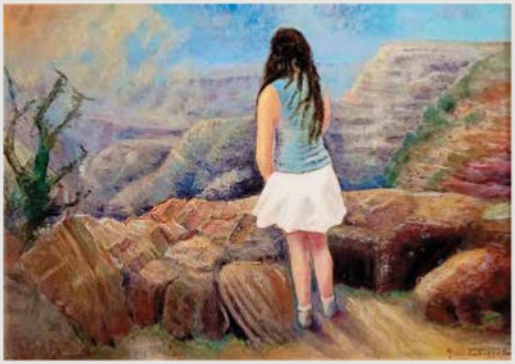
6. **RJD Gallery**, *El Invitado*, oil on wood panel, 18 x 15 in., by Juan Béjar. 7. **Gallery MAR Carmel**, *Photographic Memory: Rachel*, diptych, oil on canvas, 43½ x 59 in., by Michael Azgour. 8. **RJD Gallery**, *Eifka's World*, oil on canvas, 9½ x 11⅞ in., by Andrei Zadorine. 9. **Altamira Fine Art**, *Lasso Lass*, oil on canvas, 40 x 30 in., by Dennis Ziemienski. 10. **Gallery 35**, *The End of the Day*, oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in., by John Cutruzzola.

collect figurative art, you are choosing a companion for your life. These works become part of your home's emotional landscape—like someone you live with, converse with and grow alongside. Choose a piece whose presence you'll welcome not just on your wall, but in your daily life."

Michael Azgour, represented by **Gallery MAR Carmel**, is a mid-career San Francisco Bay Area artist whose work generally focuses on the individual and often places them in an urban/social setting or an outdoor landscape. "Azgour's paintings are as much about his process and intentions as the final painting on the canvas," says gallery owner Thomas Cushman. "He very much wants the viewer to become an active participant in creating the meaning of the artwork and even enlists the viewer to finish the painting in their own mind's eye."

Azgour's recent figurative paintings are inspired by the impact of imagery on contemporary culture, referencing moments of transition, the inevitability of change and the uncertainty of memory. "I am interested in developing a visual language that speaks to our current experience of exposure to and integration of new technology, the persistence of traditional values despite changing global trends, and the subjective perception of reality," the artist says. "Together, with a strong influence of art history and contemporary themes, my work is informed by a deep-rooted interest in social and perceptual psychology, a reverence for color theory and my personal experiences."

Presented by **Altamira Fine Art** is Dennis Ziemienski, who brings a cinematic pulse to the figure—his characters feel both timeless and vividly alive. "Rooted in the Golden Age of Illustration, his paintings celebrate the elegance of everyday gestures," says gallery director Kimberly Duncan. "Whether it's a subtle



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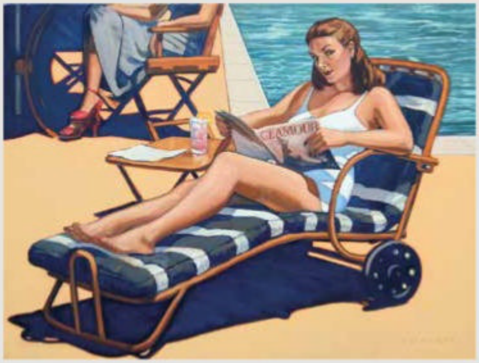

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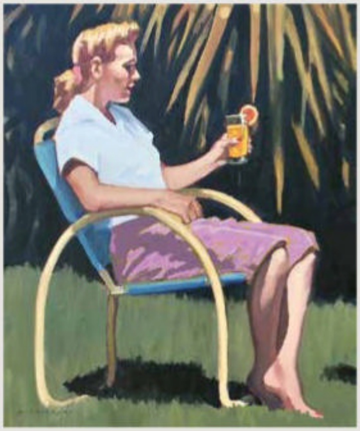

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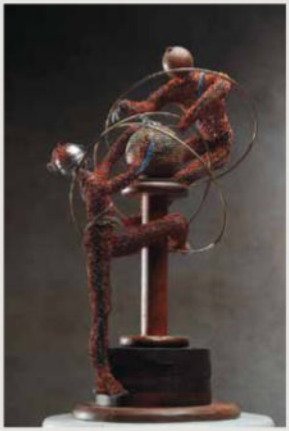

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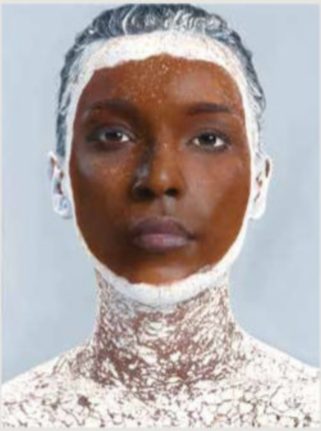

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11. **Gallery 35**, *Rachel and Nature*, oil on canvas, 24 x 36 in., by John Cutruzzola. **12.** **Altamira Fine Art**, *Red Shoes*, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 in., by Dennis Ziemienski. **13.** **Altamira Fine Art**, *Tequila Sunrise*, oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in., by Dennis Ziemienski. **14.** **Fay Wood**, *Three Ring Pandemic Circus - Can We Work Together?*, mixed media, 19 x 14 x 14 in. **15.** **Sergey Piskunov**, *White Mask 8*, oil on canvas, 63 x 47 in. **16.** **Gallery 35**, *The Good Builder*, wood, 27 x 53 in., by John Cutruzzola.

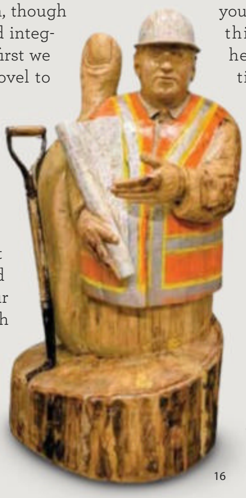
glance or the tilt of a hat, Ziemienski distills Americana through color, light and poise. His figures are archetypes of Western vitality, imbued with nostalgia yet rendered through a distinctly modern lens. There's a sense of story in every stance, a quiet confidence that turns his subjects into icons. Ziemienski reminds us that figurative art, at its best, doesn't just depict; it reveals character, emotion and era all at once."

Artist John Cutruzzola, who founded **Gallery 35**, presents figurative oil and watercolor paintings, as well as sculptural pieces. His newest wood sculpture, *The Good Builder*, is a figure of integrity, strength and honor. *The Builder* acts as the bridge towards our future, cultivating a rich foundation for the benefit of his predecessors," says Cutruzzola. "He is the ideal we strive towards and the quarter in which we find relief. *The Builder* pledges himself to the success of his mission, though he requires both labor and integrity to see it through: the first we see represented in the shovel to his right, and the second, through the upturned thumb as well as the papers held firm in his arm."

With this piece, Cutruzzola hopes to contribute to a space that honors the hard workers and passionate dreamers of our world, commemorating each individual who strives toward a future we can be proud of.

Artist **Fay Wood** quotes Virginia Woolf, "Arrange whatever pieces come your way." Wood has embraced this philosophy to create her inventive and imaginative found object art. She features a new series of mixed media, three-dimensional pieces of circus performers—made during the pandemic—in pieces like *Three Ring Pandemic Circus - Can We Work Together?*, *Three Ring Pandemic Circus - Trapped Dancer* and *Three-Ring Pandemic Circus - Living with These Changes*.

Wood encourages collectors to view her website and to visit her studio in Greensboro, North Carolina,



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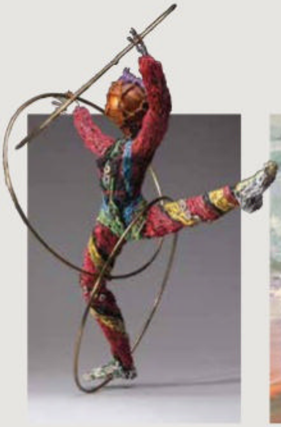

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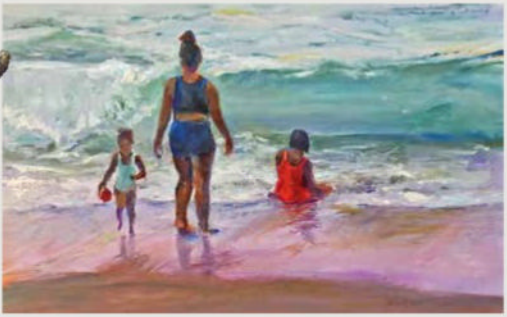

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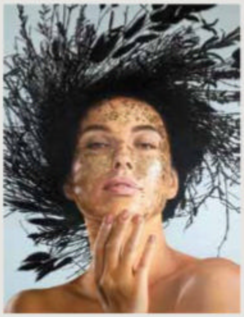

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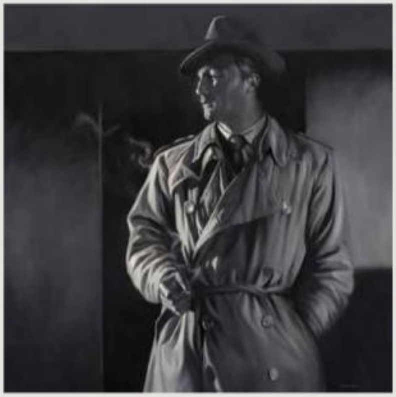

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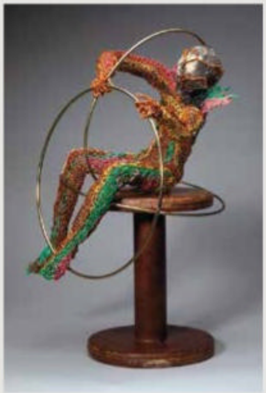

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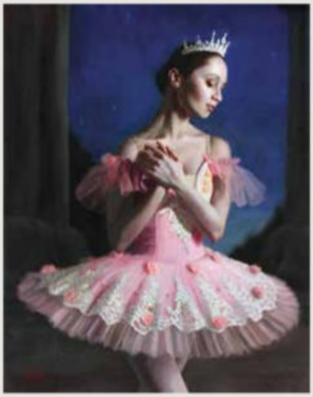

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17. Fay Wood *Three Ring Pandemic Circus - Trapped Dancer*, mixed media, 18 x 12 x 11 in. **18. Jessica Wicken**, *Shades of Joy*, oil on linen, 14 x 24 in. **19. Sergey Piskunov**, *Golden Mask XI*, oil on canvas, 67 x 51 in. **20. Richard Abraham**, *Private Eye*, (Inspired by *Out of the Past* - RKO 1947), oil on canvas, 36 x 36 in. **21. Fay Wood**, *Three-Ring Pandemic Circus - Living with These Changes*, mixed media, 18½ x 9½ x 15½ in. **22. Robin Williamson**, *Before the Slumber*, oil, 18 x 14 in.

to see her inspiring drawings, oil paintings on canvas, reverse oil on glass, collage and sculpture. Her work can also be found at *Red Dot Miami,* booth 110, during *Miami Art Week*, from December 3 to 7.

Jessica Wicken paints landscapes, cityscapes and still lifes, but people, alone or in any scene, have always been her favorite subject matter. "In North Carolina, I especially enjoy people at the beach when they are dropping all their cares as they enjoy the environment," she says. "Whether in oil or watercolor, I strive to capture their unique beauty and mood of the moment. In any genre, one will find my love of color quite evident. Figurative work reminds me that we are all spiritual beings having a human experience."

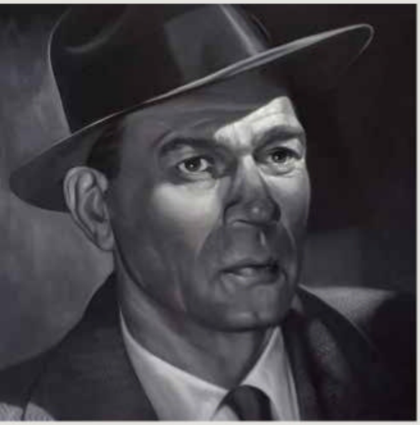
Find Wicken's work on her website, her studio at Artworks in Wilmington, North Carolina, and Evergreen Home Furnishings in Evergreen, Colorado.

Growing up in Michigan, painter **Richard Abraham** was captivated by the local library's art and film sections. Massive tomes filled with moody, mysterious stills of classic actors like James Cagney and Greta Garbo left a deep impression—even in an era when watching those vintage movies felt impossible. While Abraham built a 25-year career as a landscape painter, his fascination with Old Hollywood endured. Then, when Covid hit the stage, his passions converged. "I just wanted to paint 1930s-era Bette Davis—it was an escape," he recalls.

In depicting the desperate protagonists of film noir, he found they conveyed an emotional anxiety that unexpectedly reflected our own time; it was more than just nostalgia.

Abraham meticulously curates his references, grabbing stills from the films. "It's all about value and form," he says. "Robert Mitchum's trench coat becomes a landscape of folds with shadows and reflected light." For Abraham, following his interests is the key: "You just go with it; enthusiasm is enough. You follow what gets you to the easel."

Sergey Piskunov's figurative paintings explore the intersection of hyperrealism and quiet emotional resonance. His works often portray serene, introspective female figures rendered with astonishing technical precision, yet always with a sense of stillness and symbolic weight. Each piece is the result of up to 700 hours of layered oil work, with Piskunov carefully building the surface to reflect not just physical detail, but presence—the feeling that the subject exists in her own



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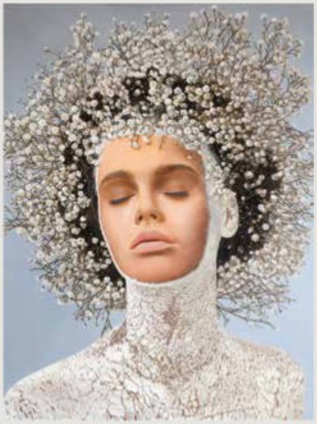

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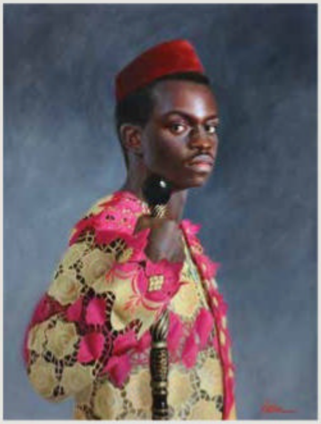

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23. **Richard Abraham**, *Holly Martins*, (Inspired by *The Third Man* - Rialto Pictures 1949), oil on canvas, 30 x 30 in. **24.** **Sergey Piskunov**, *White Mask XI*, oil on canvas, 63 x 47 in. **25.** **Robin Williamson**, *The Inheritance*, oil, 24 x 18 in.

moment, beyond the canvas. Inspired by classical portraiture and contemporary aesthetics, he often weaves in organic textures like dried flowers or cracked surfaces to emphasize the contrast between idealized beauty and natural impermanence. For Piskunov, figurative art is not about copying reality but creating a suspended emotional state and scene the viewer can enter and interpret through their own lens. His goal is for the figure to feel alive yet untouchable, intimate yet distant—timeless.

When collecting for the genre, he says, "Don't just look for skill, look for presence. A strong figurative work should feel like it's watching you back. Choose pieces that evoke a feeling you can't quite name. That's usually the one that stays with you the longest."

Robin Williamson's inspiration for figurative painting comes from a deep admiration for the beauty, strength and expressive power of the human form. "I am endlessly fascinated by how the body can communicate emotion, story and spirit without the need for words," she says. "Each gesture, pose and subtle shift of light across the figure reveals something unique about the person before me, something both intimate and universal."

Williamson's piece *The Inheritance*, speaks to the quiet dignity and strength that come from knowing one's identity and heritage. "In this work, I sought to capture not only the likeness of my subject, but the deeper sense of legacy carried within him—those unseen qualities of faith, character and beauty that transcend time." In *Before the Slumber*, the artist captures a moment in the classical ballet *The Sleeping Beauty*, on the fateful night of Princess Aurora's 16th birthday. The soft light and delicate textures of her costume echo the dreamlike quality of the story itself, while her inward gaze suggests a world of emotion beneath the surface.

FEATURED Artists & Galleries

ALTAMIRA FINE ART

7038 E. Main Street, Scottsdale,
AZ 85251, (480) 949-1256
az@altamiraart.com
www.altamiraart.com

FAY WOOD STUDIO

6101 Ballinger Road, Greensboro,
NC 27410, (336) 370-6157
www.faywoodstudio.com

GALLERY 35

35 Queen Street West
Brampton, Ontario L6Y 1L9
+1 (905) 457-3660, inquires@gallery35.ca, www.gallery35.ca

GALLERY MAR CARMEL

Dolores 5SW Ocean Avenue
Carmel, CA 93921, (831) 624-2000
gallerymarcarmel@gmail.com
www.gallerymarcarmel.com

JESSICA WICKEN

(303) 653-2650, jwicken@hotmail.com
www.jessicawickenart.com

RJD GALLERY

227 N. Main Street, Romeo, MI 48065
(586) 281-3613, www.rjdgallery.com

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308 Prince Street, Studio 510
St. Paul, MN 55101
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ROBIN WILLIAMSON

rgwilliamson@comcast.net
www.robinwilliamsonfineart.com
robin_williamson

SERGEY PISKUNOV

Reeuwijk, Netherlands
www.piskunovsergey.com

ZIENNA BRUNSTED STEWART

www.ziennabstewart.com
zienna_zienna

THE ART LOVER'S GUIDE TO COLLECTING FINE ART IN

FLORIDA

INTRODUCTION BY SARAH GIANELLI

When it comes to Florida, one can't help but zoom in on Miami during the first week of December when the city is positively bursting with art shows. The exhibitions officially listed as part of *Miami Art Week* exceed 20, with the centerpiece the renowned avant-garde *Art Basel*, where leading galleries from five continents show significant works by masters of modern and contemporary art, as well as the new generation of emerging stars. There are several other big-name satellite shows taking place concurrently, including *Red Dot Miami* and *Spectrum Miami* (see our coverage on Page 108), conveniently located under one roof; the well-attended *Art Miami* and its sister fair *CONTEXT Art Miami*, *Scope Art Show* and the list goes on. And this doesn't include all the other gallery and pop-up shows, grassroots events and other arts and culture-related happenings timed to maximize on the droves of art lovers who flood the metropolis every December.

CVS
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HOTEL
MONTANA
BOULEVARD
HOTEL

Colony Neon, Ocean Drive, South Beach, Miami. Photo by Andres Henao.
Courtesy Greater Miami Convention & Vistors Bureau.

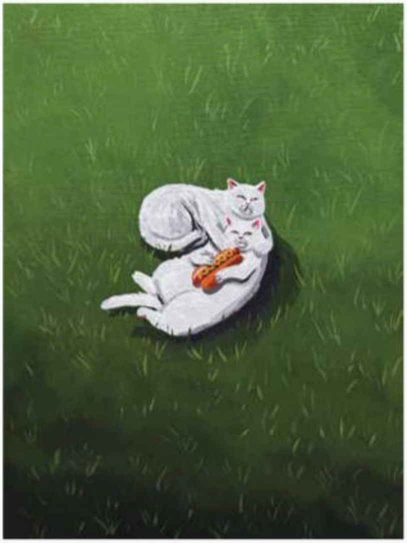
Historic St. Augustine, Florida. Courtesy Bayfront Marin House.

Fort Lauderdale is called the "Venice of America" for the city's 165 miles of inland waterways. Courtesy Visit Lauderdale.

Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens in downtown West Palm Beach is an urban sanctuary featuring a historic home, artist studio exhibition galleries and rare palm and cycad gardens. Courtesy Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens, West Palm Beach, FL.

But big city intensity with so much to do and see—especially during a citywide art week—can be overwhelming and isn't for everyone. Fortunately Florida's art offerings extend far beyond the biggest and busiest metropolises where you can enjoy the mellower side of the Sunshine State's creative spirit.

In the following pages, we will introduce you to galleries, arts organizations and independent artists located in places like St. Augustine. Founded in 1565, it is one of the oldest settlements in the country. We'll also visit locales like Orlando, the coastal village of Tequesta, the elegant barrier island of Palm Beach, and Fort Lauderdale, widely known as the "Venice of America" for its nearly 200 miles of inland waterways.



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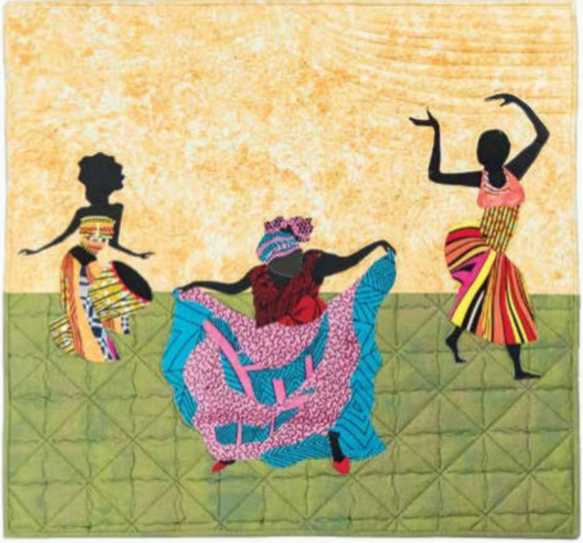

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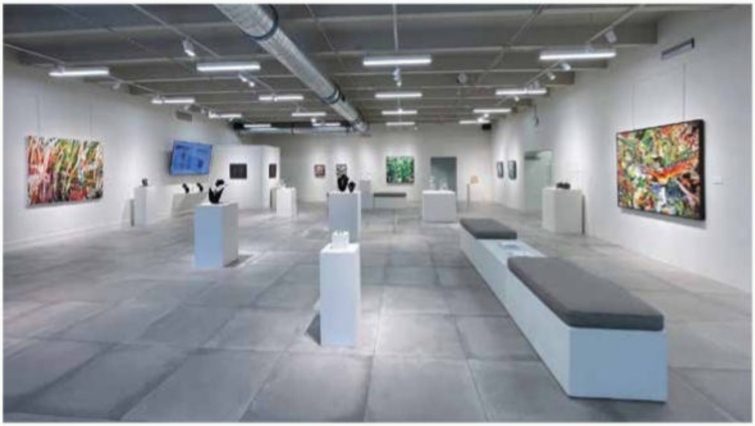
Lighthouse ArtCenter

373 Tequesta Drive
Tequesta, FL 33469
(561) 746-3101
www.lighthousearts.org

For over 60 years, Lighthouse ArtCenter (LAC) in the seaside town of Tequesta has been a cultural cornerstone for Palm Beach and Martin Counties. With a mission to enrich lives through the joy of art, LAC welcomes more than 30,000 visitors annually to its three-building campus featuring state-of-the-art galleries and art studios. The 2026 season offers a dynamic lineup of exhibitions and events designed to inspire, challenge and delight—three of which stand out as season highlights.

Opening January 15, *The Art of Danial Ryan* showcases Ryan's emotionally resonant, whimsically irreverent paintings of cats caught in the complexities of human life. March 1 marks the opening of the 13th *Annual Plein Air Festival*, a nationally recognized week-long celebration where top artists paint local landscapes live, from ocean vistas to historic streetscapes. The festival includes demonstrations, collector events and the chance to purchase fresh works straight from the easel.

Rounding out the season is *TRIO*, opening April 23 in partnership with Studio Art Quilt Associates. Featuring 40 fiber artists from the Southeast, this contemporary quilt exhibition explores the "power of three" through repetition, rhythm and visual storytelling.



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Lighthouse ArtCenter, *I Love you Dawg*, gouache on canvas, 12 x 9 in., by Danial Ryan.

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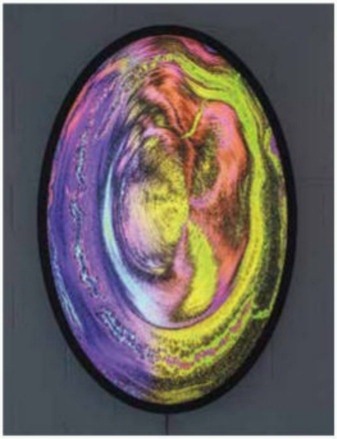
Lighthouse ArtCenter, *Dancing Girls*, fiber art, 27 x 29 in., by Phyllis Petrillo.

3
Lighthouse ArtCenter hosts regular rotating exhibitions in their state-of-the-art gallery.



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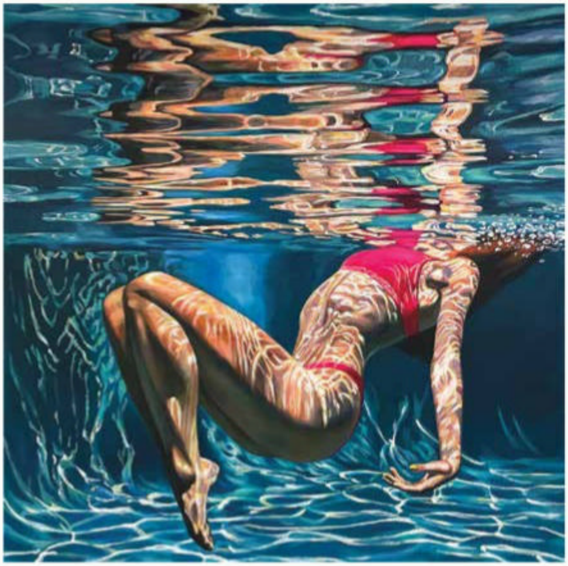
Luminato Gallery

46 Hayden Street
Toronto, ON, Canada M4Y 1V8
+1 (647) 425-8805
inquiry@luminatogallery.com
www.luminatogallery.com

Luminato Gallery, a leading Canadian gallery based in Toronto, Ontario, with plans to expand in Miami, will present a curated selection of work at *CONTEXT Art Miami*, a contemporary art show happening December 2 through 7 during the city's *Miami Art Week*. Known for presenting bold and innovative artwork by internationally renowned artists, Luminato Gallery is committed to showcasing work that sparks conversation and invites viewers to experience art through new perspectives and transformative ways of seeing. At *CONTEXT Art Miami*, Luminato Gallery brings together artists who each offer a distinct approach to looking. Together they compose a polyphony in which diversity is not merely represented, it's enacted. This year at *CONTEXT Art Miami*, Luminato Gallery invites collectors to experience art that is not only seen, but felt. The diversity of perspective among each artist expands the boundaries of perception, reminding us that perception is more of a process than a conclusion; it's a sustained willingness to look again, and in looking again, to discover more than what we saw first.

Anchored by an ethos of care, Luminato Gallery unites innovation and philanthropy, with 10 percent of each sale supporting cancer research and patient treatments. A visit to Luminato Gallery promises new ways of seeing, feeling and connecting through art, with every investment contributing to a meaningful cause.

For more information about *CONTEXT Art Miami* visit the show website at www.contextartmiami.com.



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1
Luminato Gallery, *Untitled: Colour-Shifting*, mixed media on tempered glass, stainless steel, and LED, 60 x 40 in., by Emre Namyeter.

2
Installation shot of Luminato Gallery featuring artworks by Victoria Kovalenchikova and Emre Namyeter.

3
Luminato Gallery, *Allegra II*, acrylic on canvas, 60 x 60 in., by Pavlina Alea.

1

2

1
ZimSculpt, *Water Bearer*, springstone, 72 x 12 x 14 in., by Gregory Mutasa.

2
ZimSculpt, *Young Love*, dolomite, 9 x 20 x 80 in., by Dominic Benhura.

3
ZimSculpt, *Play Time*, springstone, 7 x 26 x 38 in., by Dominic Benhura.

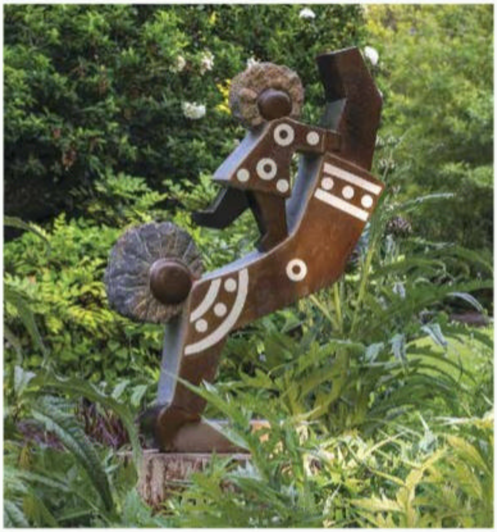
ZimSculpt

(469) 662-4741
vivienne@zimsculpt.com
www.zimsculpt.com

For over 25 years, ZimSculpt has captivated audiences across the globe with its stunning showcase of hand-carved Shona stone sculptures from Zimbabwe.

Next year, from January 18 through April 19, the internationally acclaimed exhibition returns to the United States for its 14th show, transforming the lush landscapes of Bonnet House Museum & Gardens in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, into an open-air gallery of movement, form and cultural expression. Set within this extraordinary estate—once the winter retreat of artists Frederic Clay Bartlett and Evelyn Fortune Bartlett—the exhibition is uniquely placed at a venue steeped in artistry and creative legacy. Bonnet House's combination of studio, gardens and architecture provides the perfect setting for Shona sculpture, where art and nature beautifully intersect.

Each sculpture is a collectible piece crafted from Zimbabwe's indigenous stones. The works range from intricate tabletop pieces to monumental 7-foot outdoor forms.



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Visitors will have the rare opportunity to meet and watch renowned sculptors Passmore Mupindiko and Shine Muzika sculpt and create pieces live on-site, offering insight into their process. Every piece is available for purchase.

Founded by Vivienne and Joseph Croisette, ZimSculpt has exhibited in major botanical gardens around the world, earning recognition for elevating African contemporary art on a global stage.

This immersive exhibition at Bonnet House invites art lovers to experience the raw beauty, strength and harmony that define Shona sculpture—where every curve tells a story, and every stone carries a soul. Visit www.zimsculpt.com or www.bonnethouse.com for exhibition details.

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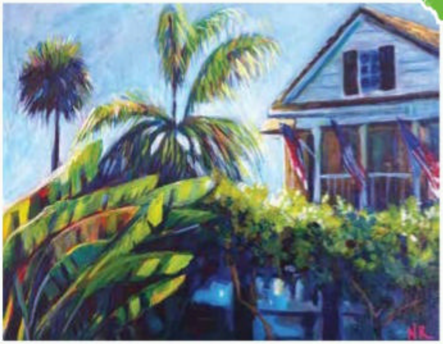

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St. Augustine Art Association

22 Marine Street
St. Augustine, FL 32084
info@staaa.org, www.staaa.org

The St. Augustine Art Association (STAAA), founded in 1924 and located in the heart of the nation's oldest city, champions the arts through its vibrant exhibitions, educational programs and community engagement. STAAA offers a dynamic year-round schedule that celebrates both emerging and established talent.

Through December 28, the gallery presents *Fantastic Florida*, a juried exhibit that captures the state's diverse landscapes, wildlife and cultural spirit through painting, sculpture and photography. In January, *Faces & Figures* explores the human form in all its emotional and artistic depth, featuring portraits, studies and figurative works in a range of mediums. Concurrently, the exhibit *Sacred Pilgrimage: Gaudí and Galban* represents a creative dialogue between two artists whose works reflect movement, structure and imagination inspired by architectural and natural forms. Together, these exhibits showcase the breadth and vitality of Florida's contemporary art scene, inviting collectors and art enthusiasts to experience the creativity flourishing in historic St. Augustine. The STAAA's gallery is open free to the public Tuesdays through Sundays from 12 to 4 p.m. Exhibits can also be viewed online at www.staaa.org.

An Art Affair

Eleven 14th Lane, Suite B
St. Augustine Beach, FL 32080
(904) 907-5720
www.floridaartaffair.com
www.anartaffair.shop

Thom and Melodye Stimpel have been collecting fine art for more than 30 years, with the intent of someday opening a gallery and selling their collection to other art lovers. Their gallery, An Art Affair, opened in November of 2024, in a small sunny space on Anastasia Island in St. Augustine Beach. Thom calls it a "hybrid gallery" since it blends a collection of fine art from world-renowned artists with Melodye's colorful impressionistic work.

On the fine art side, they offer works from Rembrandt, Picasso, Dali, Max, Ilyayev, Tarkay, Godard, Cheval, Bellet, Coleman, Derubeis, Duaiv, Wall, Yanke and many others.

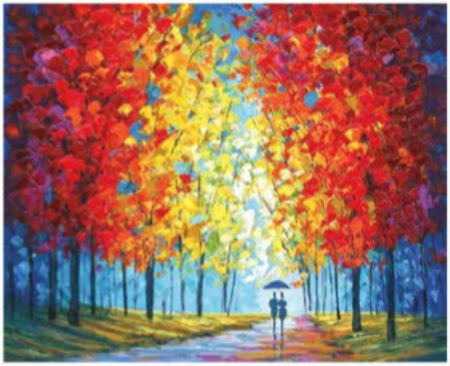
The other side features Melodye's creations. She began painting in high school, learning new techniques and experimenting with a range of styles and materials over the years. Since 2020 most of her work has utilized fluid acrylics. She says that she "pours with intention," selecting colors that fit a story and allowing chemistry to dictate part of the scene. Thereafter she hand-embellishes each piece using palette knives, brushes, her fingers and elements of the natural world such as sea grasses, coquina, shells, leaves, glass, and frequently adding a resin finish for brightness, depth, intensity and contrast.

1
The courtyard at St. Augustine Art Association.

2
St. Augustine Art Association, *Saturday Afternoon at O.C. Whites*, acrylic, 11 x 14 in., by Nikki Rakov.

3
An Art Affair, *Walk with Me*, oil on canvas, 28 x 38 in., by Slava Ilyayev.

4
An Art Affair, *Rainbow Falls*, hand-embellished acrylic pour with resin finish, 24 x 18 in., by Melodye Rouisse-Stimpel.



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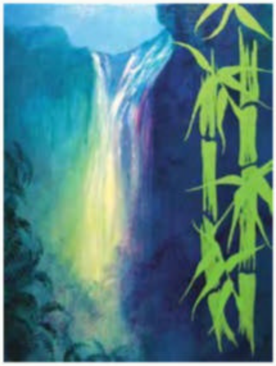

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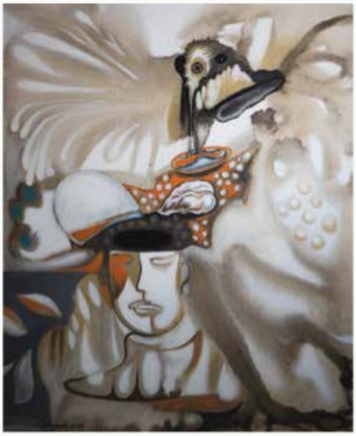

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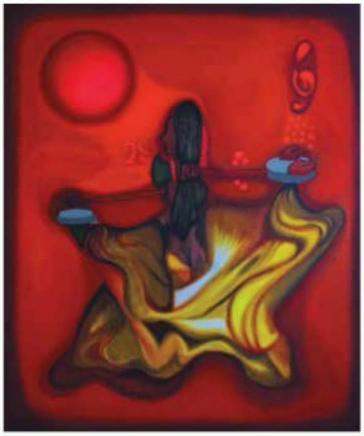


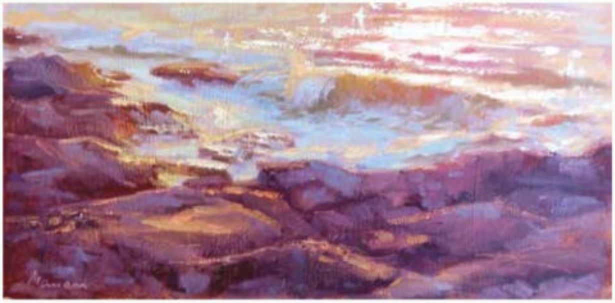
2

1
Hala Kusiak, *Freedom*,
acrylic on canvas, 43¾ x 36¼ in.

2
Hala Kusiak, *Mold Me*,
acrylic on canvas, 47 x 36¼ in.

3
Manon Sander, *Waves of Gold*,
oil, 10 x 20 in.

4
Manon Sander, *All Pumped Up*,
oil, 8 x 10 in.



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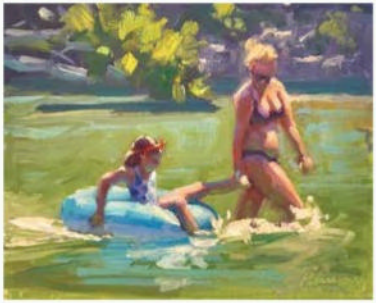

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Hala Kusiak

Orlando, FL, (407) 808-2834
info@halakusiak.com
www.halakusiakart.com

Hala Kusiak is a pioneering Iraqi-born artist whose career was shaped by the tension between repression and liberation. Raised in Baghdad, she faced strict cultural limits that forbade her from exploring sensuality, sexuality or nude subjects—restrictions that suppressed her artistic voice. Determined to create without censorship, she relocated to the United States, a move that transformed both her life and practice. In America, she found the freedom to experiment, embrace formerly prohibited themes and express her identity openly. Her work now reflects a powerful narrative of female liberation, self-ownership, and the right to create without apology.

Freedom, from 2023, is a surreal acrylic painting that visualizes the moment when the mind frees itself from inherited limitations. "*Mold Me* is a vivid metaphor for transformation and self-discovery set within a deep red field that radiates emotional intensity," explains Kusiak. "At its center stands a dark, silhouetted figure with outstretched arms—a posture that reads as both surrender and empowerment, as if ready to rise."

The sense of freedom Kusiak now experiences has manifested not only in her canvases but in her daily life—how she dresses, speaks, and chooses to exist. Guided by a philosophy of kindness to oneself and fearless authenticity, Kusiak's journey embodies the universal pursuit of self-expression and the role of art in reclaiming one's true self. In her words, "I paint moments in life as I see it."

Manon Sander

North Palm Beach, FL, (415) 606-7685
manondesigns@comcast.net
www.manonsander.com
ManonSander

Manon Sander is an award-winning modern impressionist, born and raised in Berlin, who resides in Southern Florida. The tropical landscape and mild climate present her with never-ending inspiration and opportunity to put up her easel outside and paint in plein air. The effects of light on a subject and the feeling it evokes are of great interest to Sander as she puts down her impressions in interesting patterns, luminous color and juicy brush strokes. Oils are her first love, but she also works in acrylics and gouache.

Sander maintains a studio in North Palm Beach, but prefers to work directly from life, savoring the direct communication with nature. Her work is frequently showcased in prestigious juried national shows as well as in galleries in St. Augustine, Naples, Tequesta, and Winter Park, Florida. She also leads national and international workshops in addition to teaching painting classes locally.

Ultimately, Manon aims to communicate her *joie de vivre* through uplifting paintings that reflect the color, light and joy the artist feels surrounded by, and for which she is grateful.

1

DREW MARC GALLERY
FINE ART & JEWELRY

2

1
Drew Marc Gallery hosts month exhibitions of high-end contemporary art

2
Drew Marc Gallery is located in the heart of South Tampa.

Drew Marc Gallery

2409 S. MacDill Avenue, Suite 400
Tampa, FL 33629
(813) 294-3638
www.drewmarcgallery.com

Located in the heart of South Tampa, Drew Marc Gallery has quickly become one of Florida's leading destinations for contemporary fine art. The gallery curates a dynamic roster of nationally and internationally recognized artists whose work ranges from bold abstract expressionism to refined figurative and sculptural pieces. Each exhibition is thoughtfully composed to create an immersive and elevated viewing experience for collectors, designers and art enthusiasts alike.

Owner and director Andrew Trujillo is known for his curatorial eye and commitment to showcasing artists with distinctive voices and refined craftsmanship. With monthly exhibitions, exclusive collector events, and participation in major art fairs including *Red Dot Miami* and *Hamptons Fine Art Fair*, Drew Marc Gallery continues to shape Tampa's emerging art scene while connecting clients with museum-quality works that inspire and endure.

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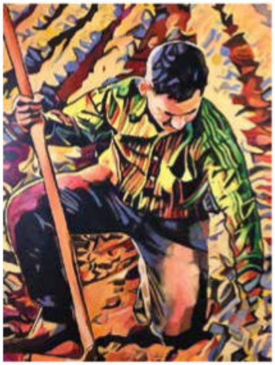
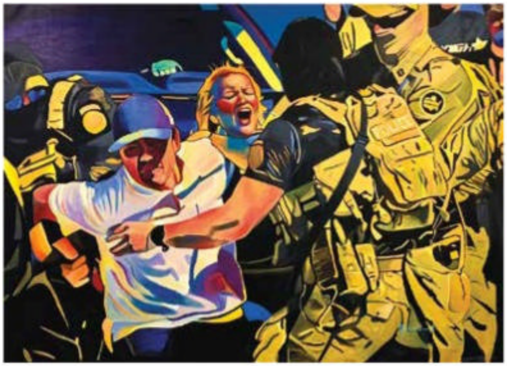
MOAH CEDAR

Michael James: The Hands That Feed Us

MOAH:CEDAR | October 13 - November 30, 2025



Ojala Que Llueva Cafe en el Campo
Acrylic on canvas | 40" x 30"



The Standoff
Acrylic on Canvas | 60" x 85"

Representation: Covet Art Gallery | Oceanside, CA | www.covetartgallery.com
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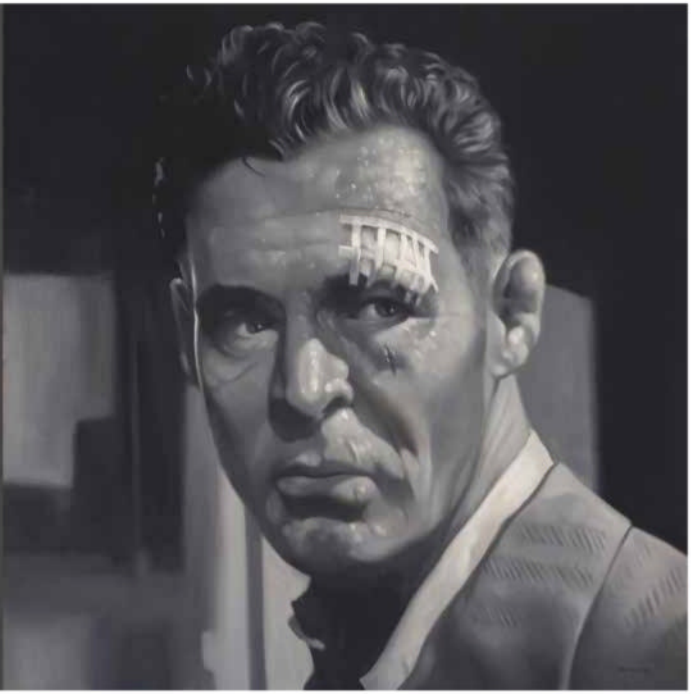
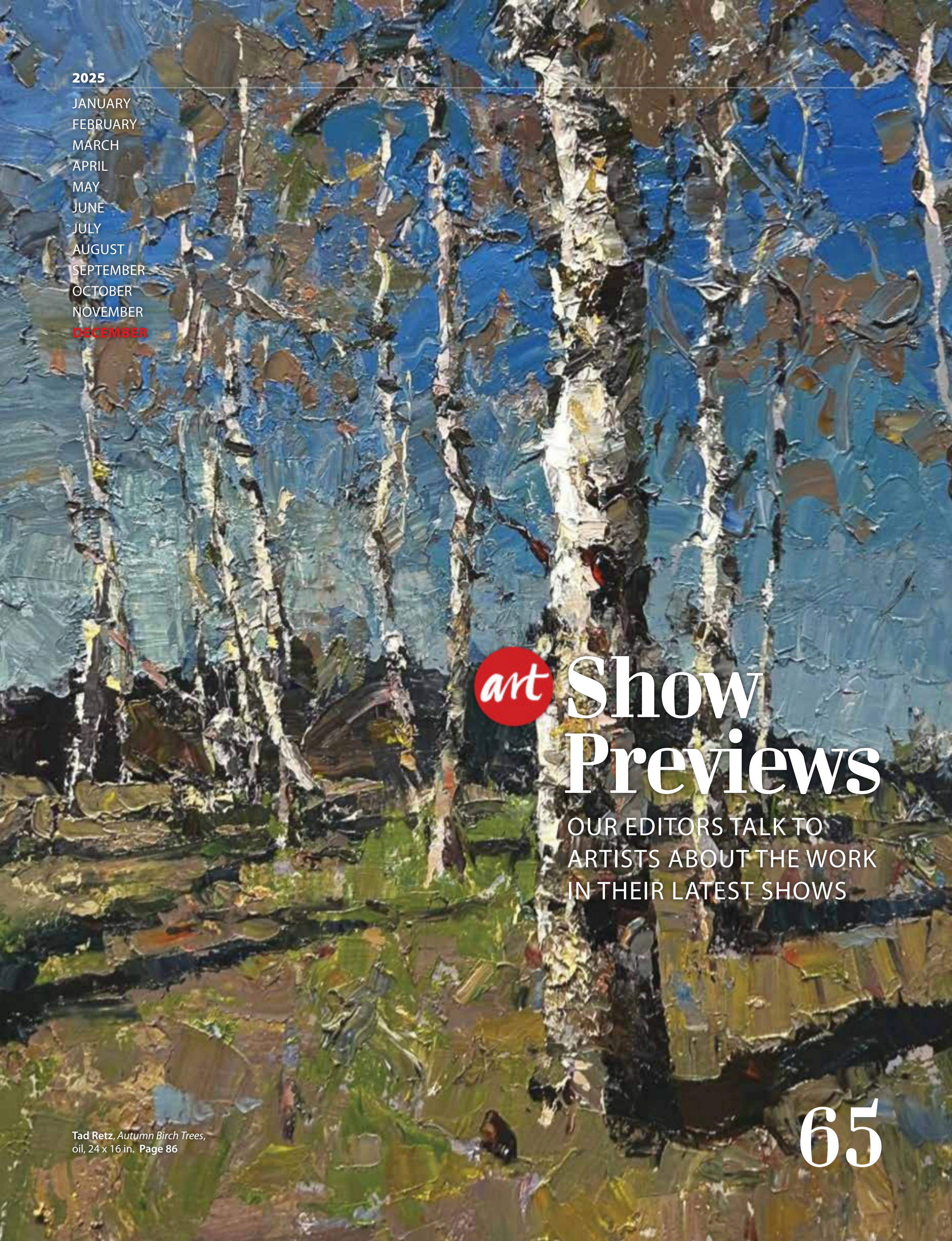




2025

JANUARY
FEBRUARY
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
NOVEMBER
DECEMBER

Show Previews

OUR EDITORS TALK TO ARTISTS ABOUT THE WORK IN THEIR LATEST SHOWS

Tad Retz, *Autumn Birch Trees*, oil, 24 x 16 in. **Page 86**

UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / ARCADIA CONTEMPORARY

12/18-1/10 New York, NY

MIRIAM HOFFMANN & CAROLINE NELSON

Old as Time

By Sarah Gianelli

This December, Arcadia Contemporary is presenting a rare joint show featuring Miriam Hoffmann and Caroline Nelson, two artists whose work is distinct in style, but who share an acute sensitivity to the nuances of figurative portraiture and the skill to bring them to life on the canvas.

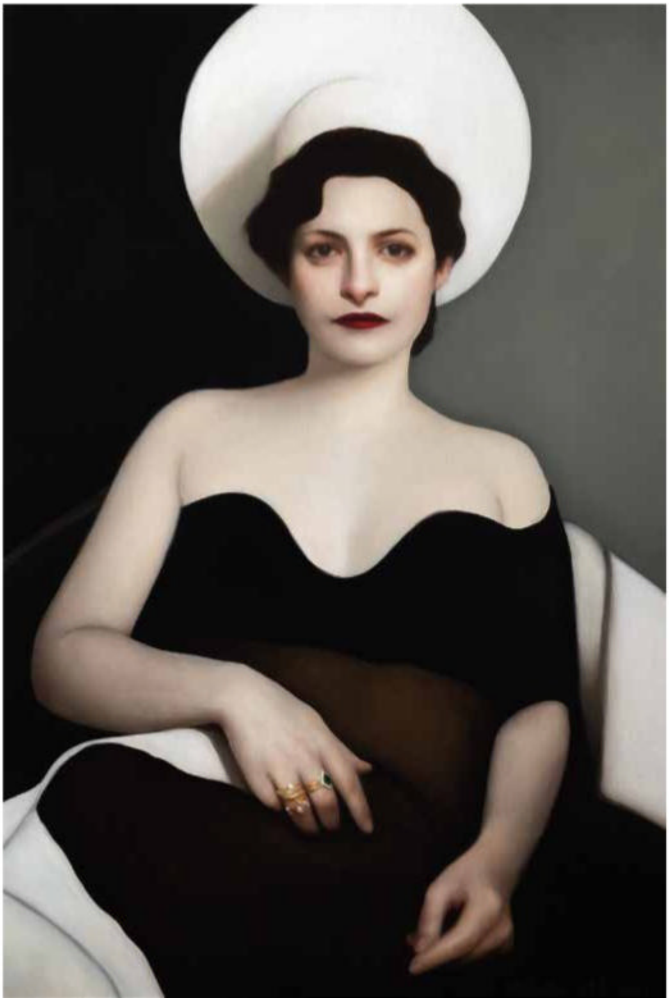
Nelson's soft, atmospheric portraits and figurative scenes are deeply rooted in old painting traditions she says have vanished from standard university art training. She feels it is her duty to uphold them by bringing classical paintings into the contemporary world.

"My visual language in painting is a focus on the rich depth of color, beautiful rendering, strong light and accurate form modeling," explains Nelson. "Beyond the constant pursuit of creating a technically proficient image, I am also searching for how to represent themes of truth, harmony, femininity, passage of time from youth to adulthood, peace, and tenderness that are beautifully depicted in the great paintings of the past and to add to that great tradition."

In her portraiture specifically, Nelson has been focusing on how to manipulate light and shadow to create volume, use gaze and expression to maximize emotional impact, accentuate skin luminosity, and select fabric and dress that best support the timeless quality she is trying to achieve. Most of the figures in Nelson's paintings are family members. As one of six children, she has a lot of subject matter to choose from. But when she wants something specific she'll look for models on Instagram. She meticulously stages her photoshoots, from the lighting to hairstyles, clothing and background. "I am very specific about the poses I orchestrate that are inspired by themes I'm studying, and compositions in paintings and photography from the 1800s that I admire," Nelson explains. A series of drawings ensue, which she eventually transfers to her painting surface. "I try to keep in mind the classical techniques of painting—light, form, color harmony, measurement, etc., and I like to incorporate elements from the classical paintings of the past that I like."

The human form has enthralled Nelson since she first saw da Vinci's *Virgin of the Rocks* when she was a little girl. "It has never left," she says. "Figures in painting can be representations of greater themes but also intimate studies of humanity and all of its complexity. The poignancy and depth of figurative paintings has survived generations and I am just one of thousands and thousands with a continued love of the harmony and beauty of the natural world, and a desire to honor it by depicting it in painting."

The guiding aspiration for Nelson's painting practice is to "pursue and



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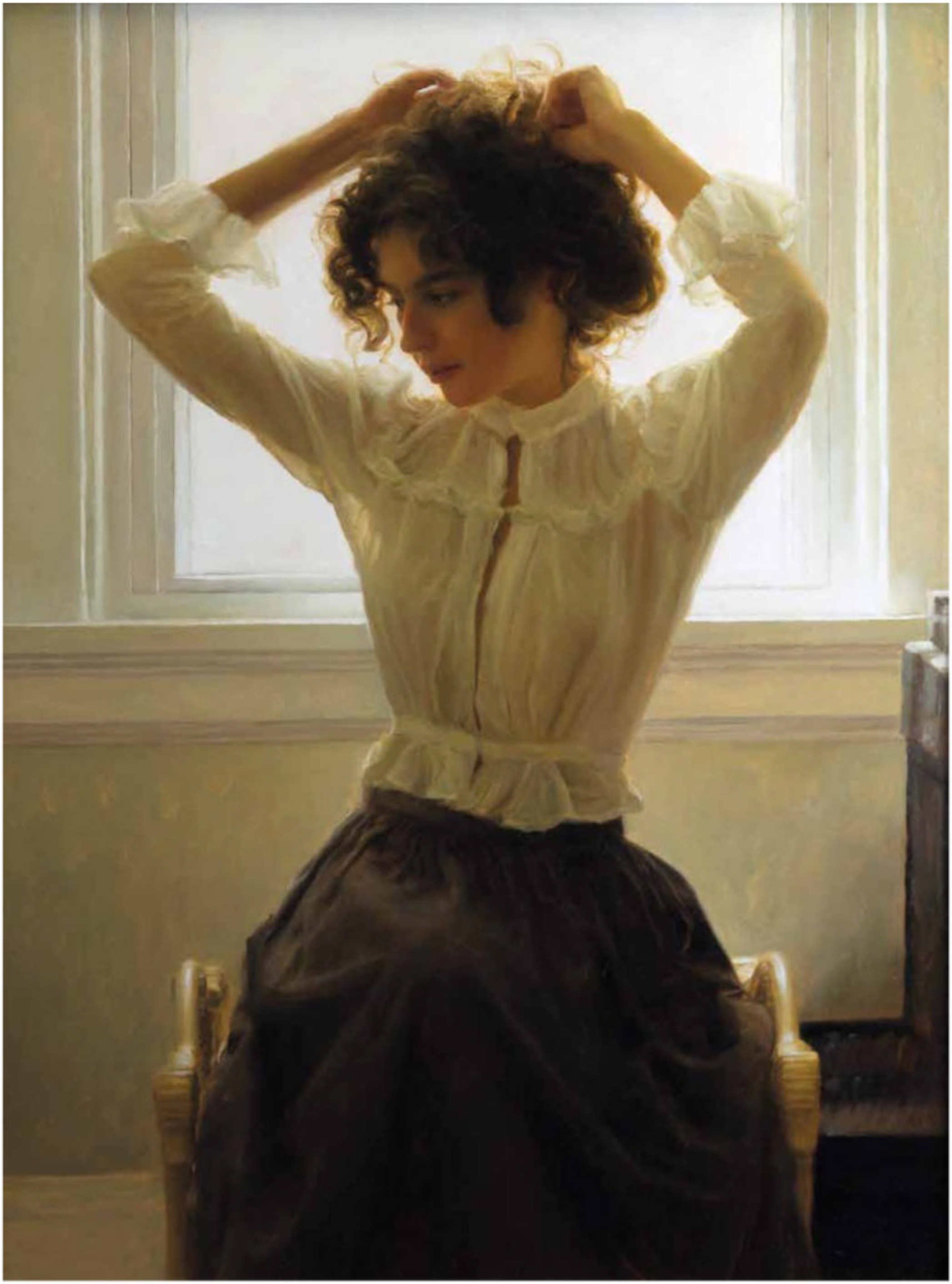
Miriam Hoffmann,
Fated, oil on linen,
36 x 24 in.

2
Caroline Nelson,
Awaiting, 2025, oil on
panel, 24 x 18 in.



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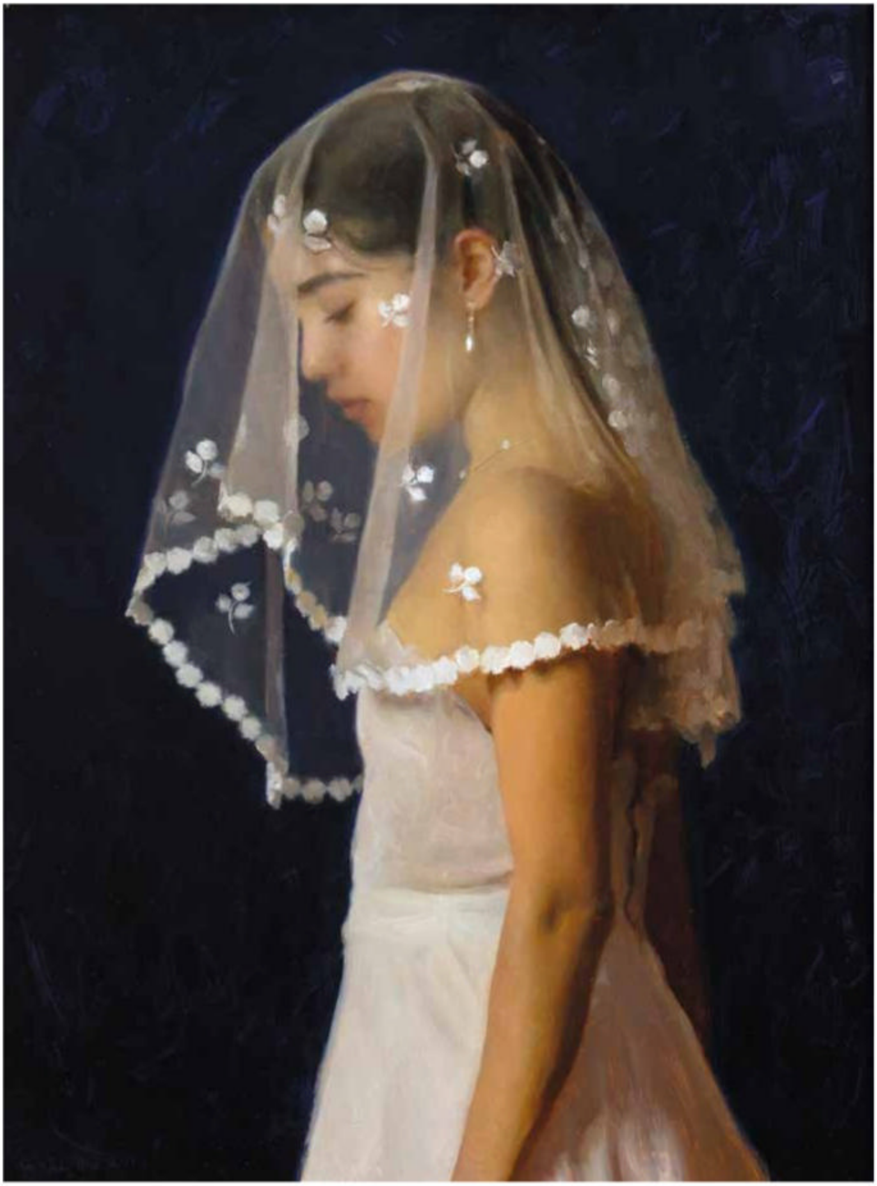

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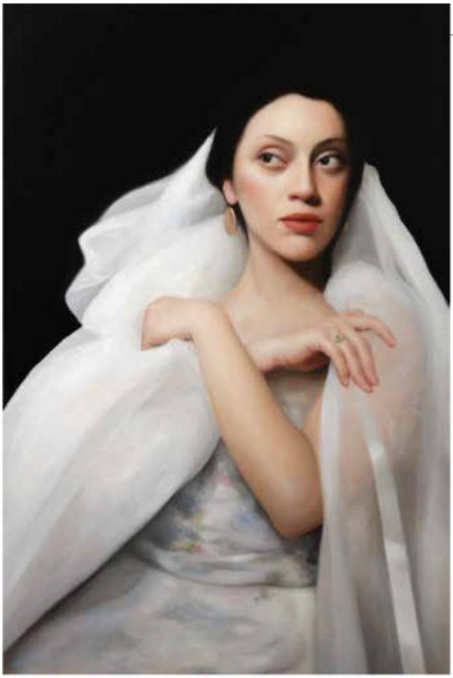
represent 'the Good, the True, and the Beautiful,'" an artmaking philosophy passed down by her teacher Henry Wingate, who had adopted the ethos from his teacher, Paul Ingbretson.

"That doctrine has been a foundational cornerstone to my artistic path," shares Nelson. "I aspire to create timeless paintings, not necessarily seeking to relive the past, but build upon the hundreds of years of realistic tradition of celebrating greater themes of humanity, both poeti-



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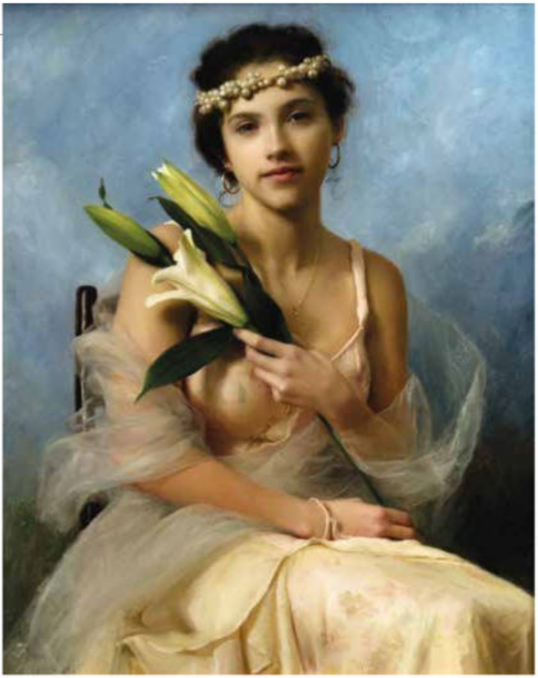

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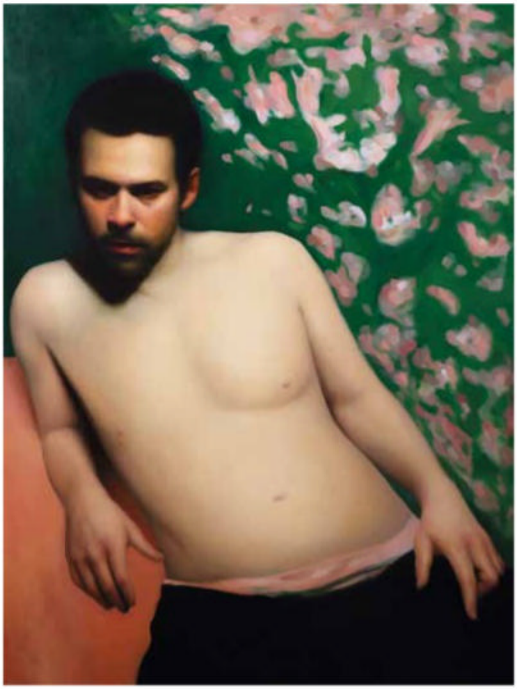
cally and beautifully."

Hoffmann's work is also classically inspired but, compared to Nelson's, has a sharper, more contemporary edge. The shadows are blacker and borders more crisply defined; skin a milky-blue white. Her subjects gaze out with a stark, but alluring, bluntness. "I'm deeply inspired by the Old Masters, by their use of light and form and composition, by the way they tell uniquely human stories through the figure," says Hoffmann. "It's honestly the only thing I've even been interested in painting. For me there is this sense of participating in a ritual that is old as time. I think there are so many different stories you can tell with the figure."

The inspiration behind her latest work, which will be featured alongside Nelson's from December 18 through January 10, 2026, in New York City, is largely the same as what drives all of her work—"the quiet complexity of human emotion and the tension between vulnerability and composure...Capturing moments of stillness, where my subject exists in a place that feels both distant and intimate. It's a place I feel myself retreating to, and I hope the viewer connects with." ●

Arcadia Contemporary 421 W. Broadway • New York, NY 10012 • (646) 861-3941 • www.arcadiacontemporary.com



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3
Caroline Nelson, *Veiled*, 2025, oil on panel, 16 x 12 in.

4
Miriam Hoffmann, *Melanie*, oil on linen, 36 x 24 in.

5
Caroline Nelson, *Lilies of the Field*, 2025, oil on linen, 20 x 16 in.

6
Miriam Hoffmann, *Among the Blossoms*, oil on linen, 40 x 30 in.

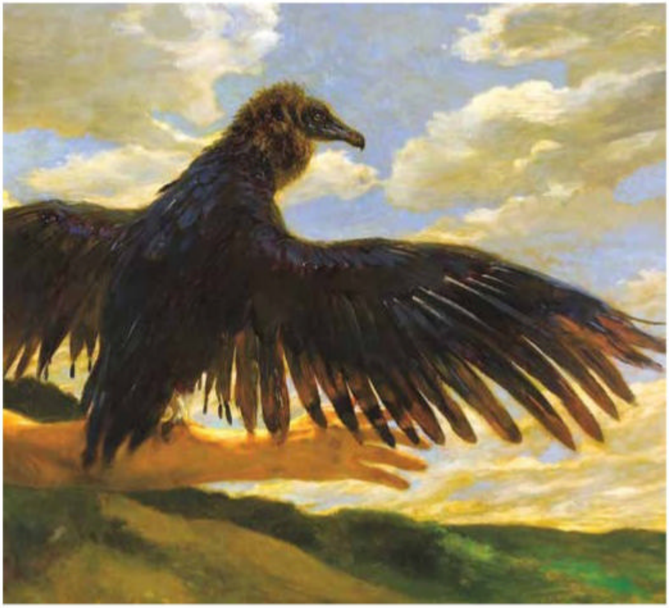
Celebrating Artists

By Michael Clawson

RJD Gallery is celebrating the end of the year and the holidays by acknowledging its talented artists and passionate collectors with a large presentation of artwork that provides a fascinating cross-section of what the gallery offers.

"As a gallery, we think about art every day—but more and more, we find ourselves thinking about the art of living as well. The holidays have a way of bringing what truly matters into focus: the people we love, the comfort of home, and the small, quiet moments that sustain us," says Joi Jackson Perle, RJD's gallery director. "Life can feel so full for many of us, in ways we don't always speak aloud, or always recognize immediately. In that fullness, gratitude becomes a refuge. It reminds us to notice the beauty still around us—whether through creativity, a shared meal, a journey taken, or a simple moment of stillness. These experiences don't just uplift us; they restore and guide us. We are wishing everyone a gentle, meaningful holiday season with those they love, and a new year filled with hope, connection, and artful living—whatever that looks like for you right now."

The December showcase will include a large variety of work in both two and three dimensions. One of the key artists with available art is England-based painter Lyndsey Jameson, whose paintings often feature nature near her home. For *Gordale Gill*, Jameson paints a woman clothed in an elaborate black dress lost in thought in an outdoor setting. "*Gordale Gill* lies on Barningham Moors in County Durham, near my home. I've explored these moors with my family for most of my life, and some of my earliest memories are of walking the hilltops with my grandparents, searching for the wildlife that lives there," Jameson says. "I feel the bleak, desolate landscape perfectly captures the spirit of the North of England; a kind of grimness that seeps



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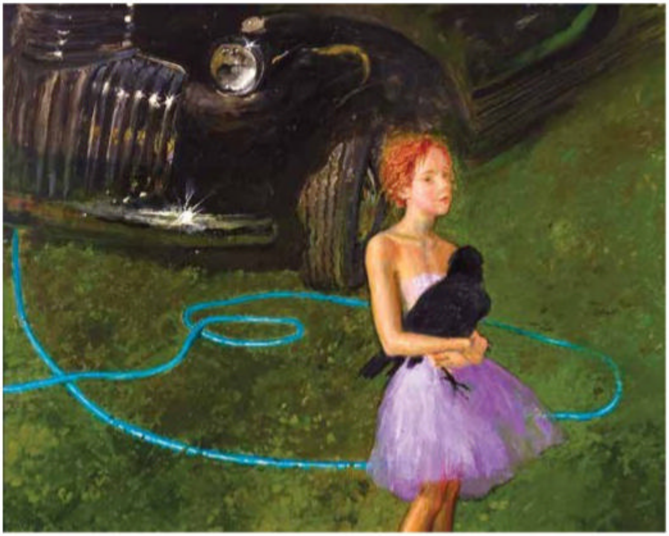
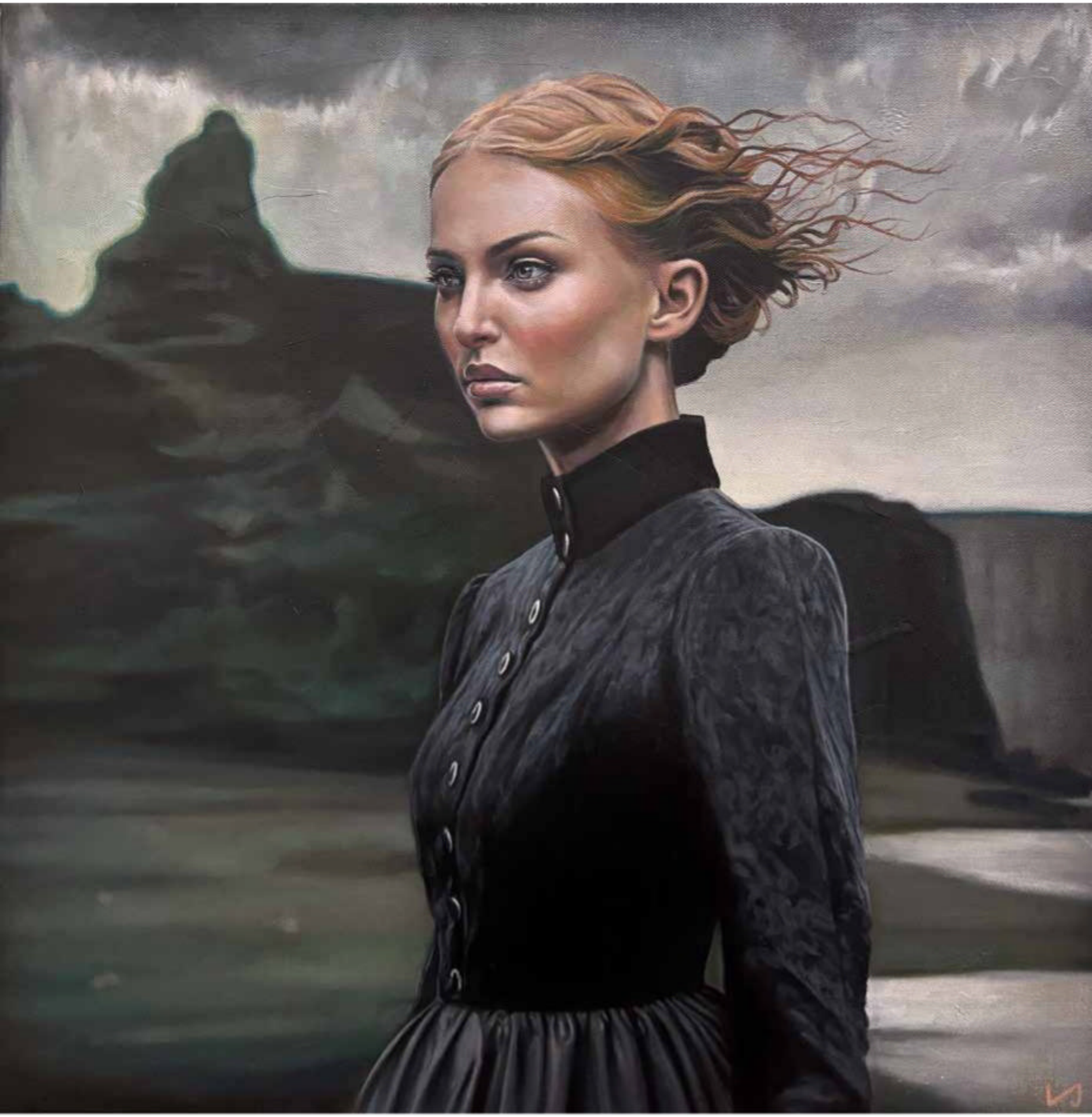


2

1
Jamie Wyeth, *Me and My Vulture*, oil on board, 28 x 31 in.

2
Jamie Wyeth, *Matinicus*, charcoal, colored pencil, gouache, watercolor on rag board, 24 x 30 in.



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into your very being. I'm drawn to bleak, existential stories and I try to shape every aspect of the image to reflect that mood."

In another work, *Inquisitors,* Jameson clung to British history to illuminate her subjects and themes. "*Inquisitors* was inspired by my reading about the Newcastle witch trials in the UK, where people, mainly women, were handed over to the authorities in exchange for money. The witch finders—paid by the number of witches they exposed—were corrupt and driven by greed," the artist says. "I chose to represent the witch finders as crows, drawing on

3
Lyndsey Jameson,
Point of Departure,
19¾ x 19¾ in.

historical artists' use of birds as symbols of surveillance—'spies' and 'eyes in the sky.' Several years ago, I bought a taxidermied crow that has since become an invaluable prop," she says, adding that clothing plays a large role within her paintings. "I don't stage each piece within a specific time period but instead match the costumes to the mood of the work. The Victorian mourning dress appears as a recurring motif throughout my practice. I make much of the clothing used in my paintings to achieve a particular look but also often collect garments or accessories that might one day prove useful."

Other works in the show include Donald Roller Wilson's painting *The Ascension of Jane*, which presents a surreal scene with a dog in a dress, a floating chair and falling bell peppers. Interpretations of the scene will surely span a variety of ideas, but one recurring thought is likely to be

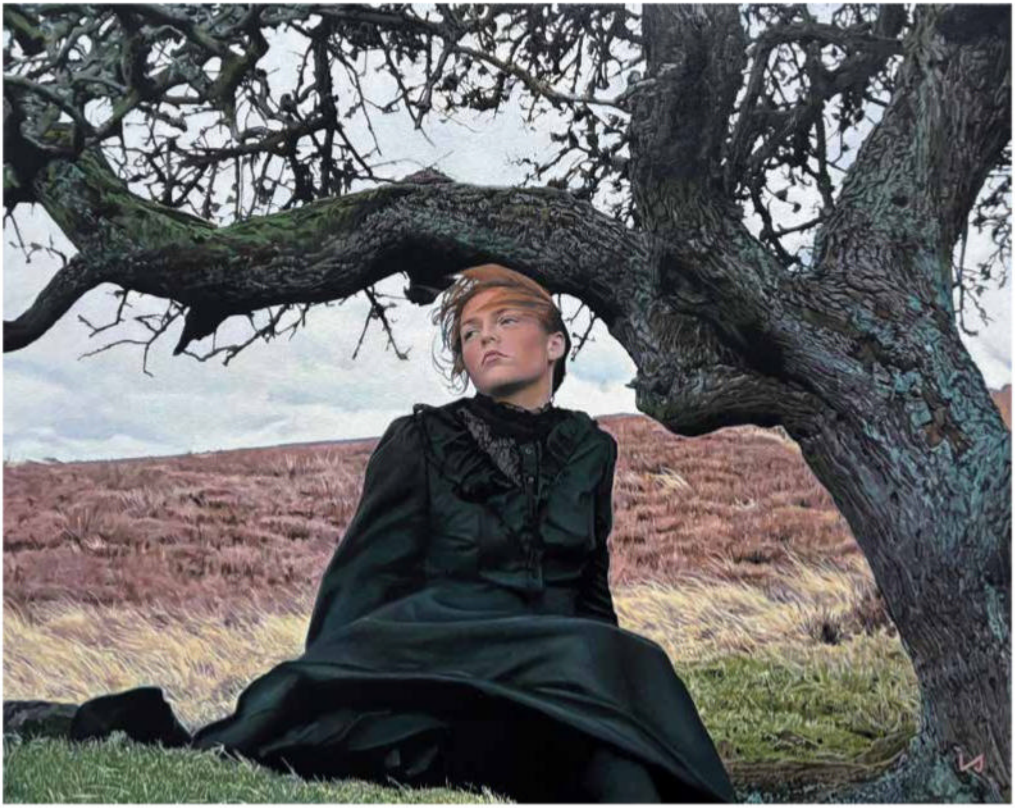
4

5

4
Kim Simonsson, *Moss Boy*, ceramic, feathers, nylon fiber, 34 x 19¾ x 17¾ in.

5
Kim Simonsson, *Moss Girl*, ceramic, feathers, nylon fiber, 37 x 19¾ x 17¾ in.

6
Lyndsey Jameson, *Gordale Gill*, oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in.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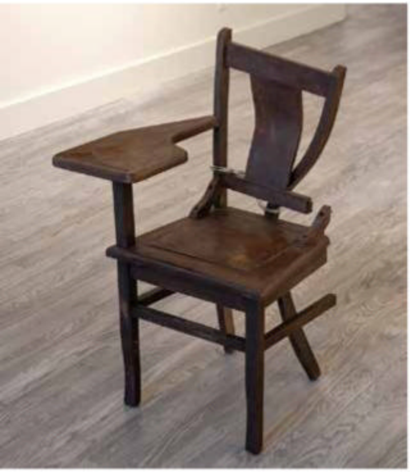

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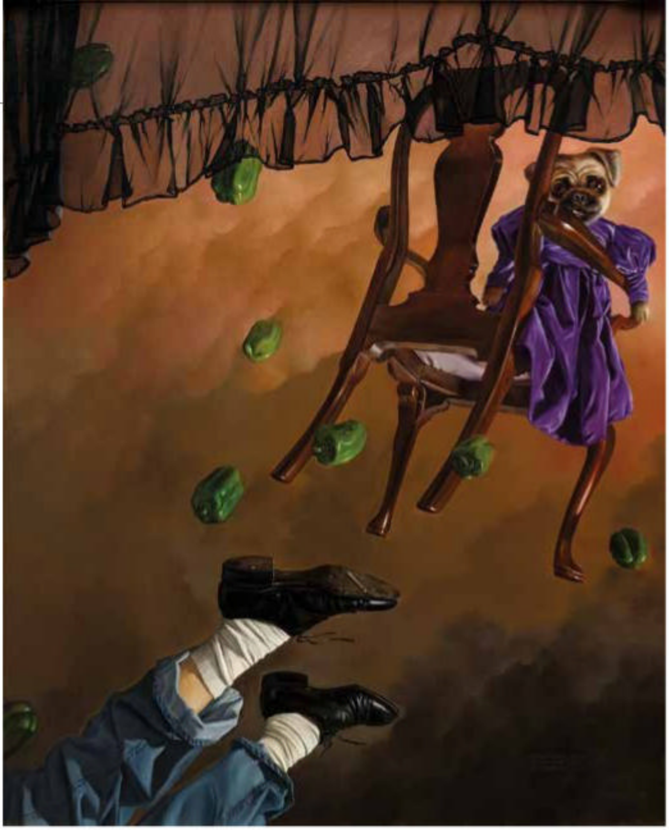
about the painting's feeling of falling with the subjects.

Two works by Jamie Wyeth will be offered: *Me and My Vulture*, showing the scavenger bird on an unseen person's arm amid a beautiful skyscape, and also *Matinicus*, featuring a girl in a purple dress standing in front of a classic car. The paintings have that unmistakable Wyeth brushwork and color palette. The artist, the son of Andrew Wyeth and grandson of N.C. Wyeth, has carved his own unique niche within contemporary realism over the last 60 years.

In addition to paintings, RJD Gallery will also be presenting sculptural works, including Finnish artist Kim Simonsson's ceramic figurative works such as *Moss Boy* and *Moss Girl*, and also pieces by Cuban sculptor Yoan Capote, who creates bronze chairs that seem to defy physics as they stand with "broken" edges and elements that have the same qualities as optical illusions.

These works, and many others, are now on view at RJD Gallery in Romeo, Michigan. ●

RJD Gallery 227 N. Main Street • Romeo, MI 48065 •
(586) 281-3613 • www.rjdgallery.com



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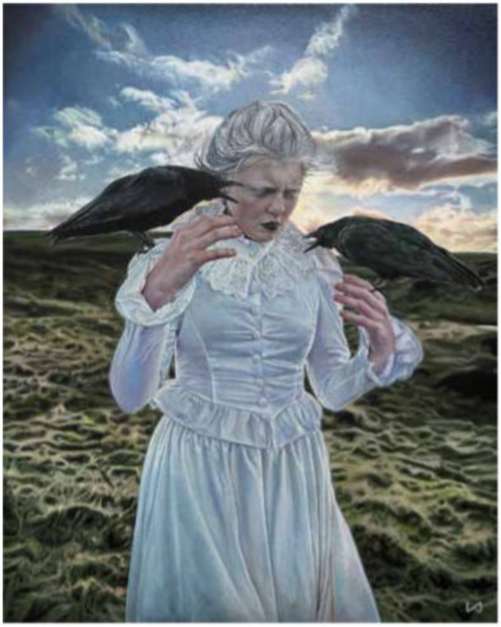

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Yoan Capote, *Dogma*, bronze with stainless steel handcuffs, 34 x 17 x 17¼ in.

8
Donald Roller Wilson, *The Ascension of Jane*, oil on canvas, 50 x 40 in.

9
Lyndsey Jameson, *Inquisitors*, oil on canvas, 30 x 24 in.

Little Impressions

By Chelsea Koressel

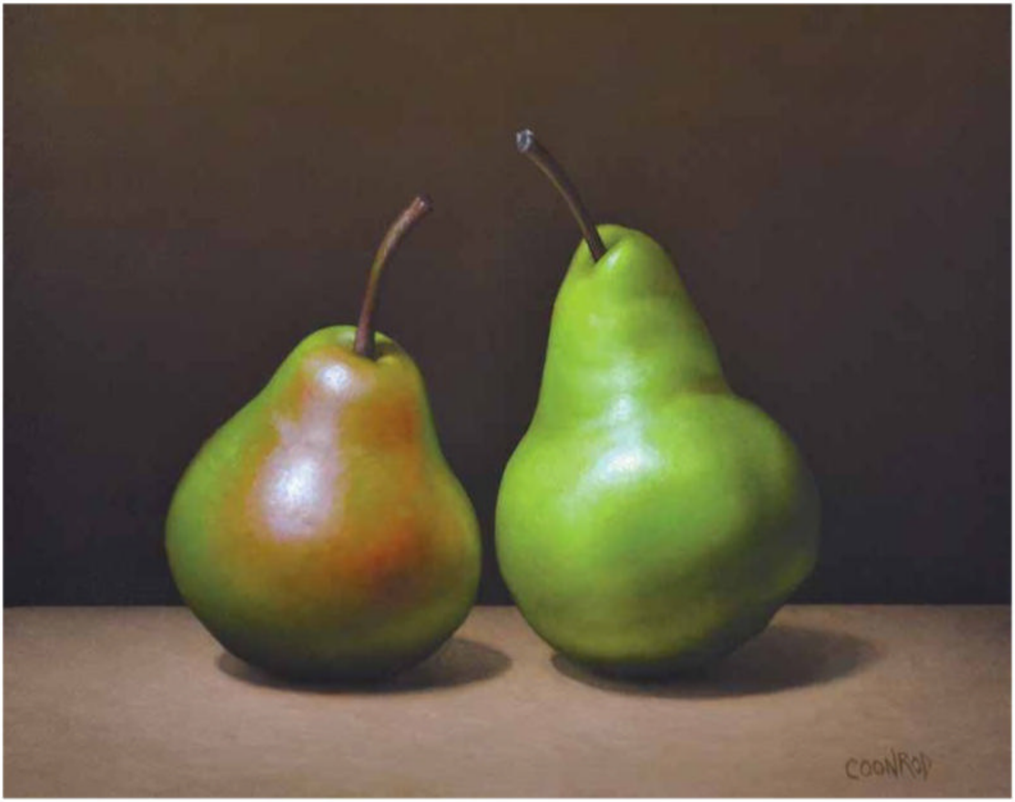
Like many other galleries during the holiday season, Principle Gallery features a diverse showcase of small and miniature artworks—creating accessibility through lower price points. For the gallery's annual *Small Works Invitational*, collectors will find over 80 artworks, "ranging from elegant landscapes to expressive figurative studies," says gallery director, Clint Mansell. "These small-scale pieces showcase the technical mastery and creative range of renowned artists from all over the world."

Also on view are impressive still life options, like Trish Coonrod's 8-by-10-inch painting, *2 Pears*. As the title suggests, we see two pieces of the fruit executed in a high realism under stellar lighting. "Pears are a favorite subject matter of mine," the artist explains. "They have shapes that hint at personality, and when composed with intention, they can suggest human interactions. When I'm beginning a new pear painting, I start with several pears and methodically study how they visually relate to one another. It can take up to an hour or so to decide which two or three I want to use and how I want to compose them. For this painting, I liked how the pears were two different varieties—one with a blush of red, which added more color to the composition. I was also drawn to the tilt of the stems which brought the two objects together."

Michael T. Davis' 12-by-12-inch show piece, *Hooded Merganser, 2 Snails, and Ginger*, features a whimsical still life example painted with great detail and impeccable shadow work. Davis often starts with

1
Trish Coonrod, *2 Pears*, oil on aluminum, 8 x 10 in.

2
Michael T. Davis, *Hooded Merganser, 2 Snails, and* Ginger, oil on panel, 12 x 12 in.



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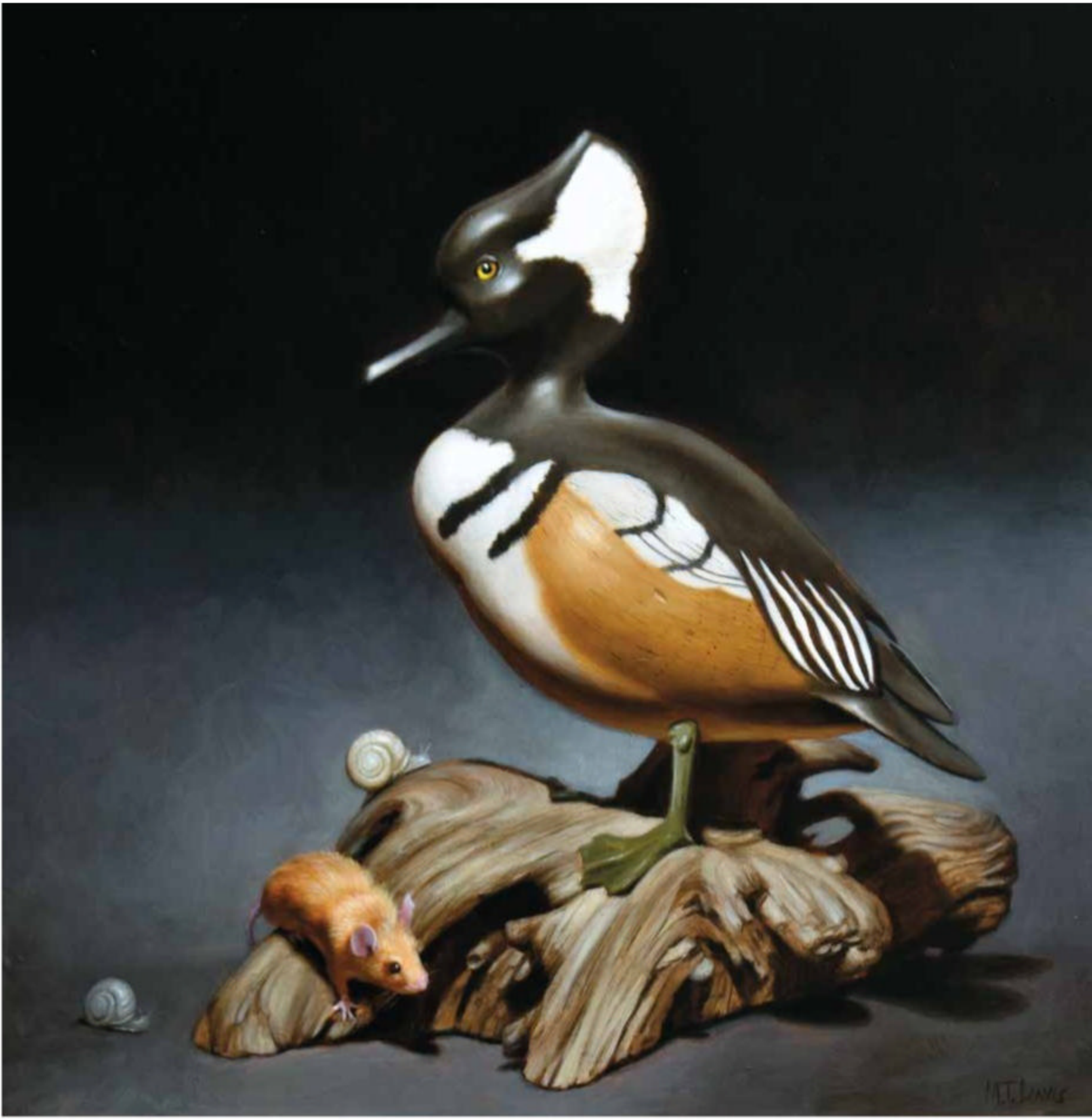

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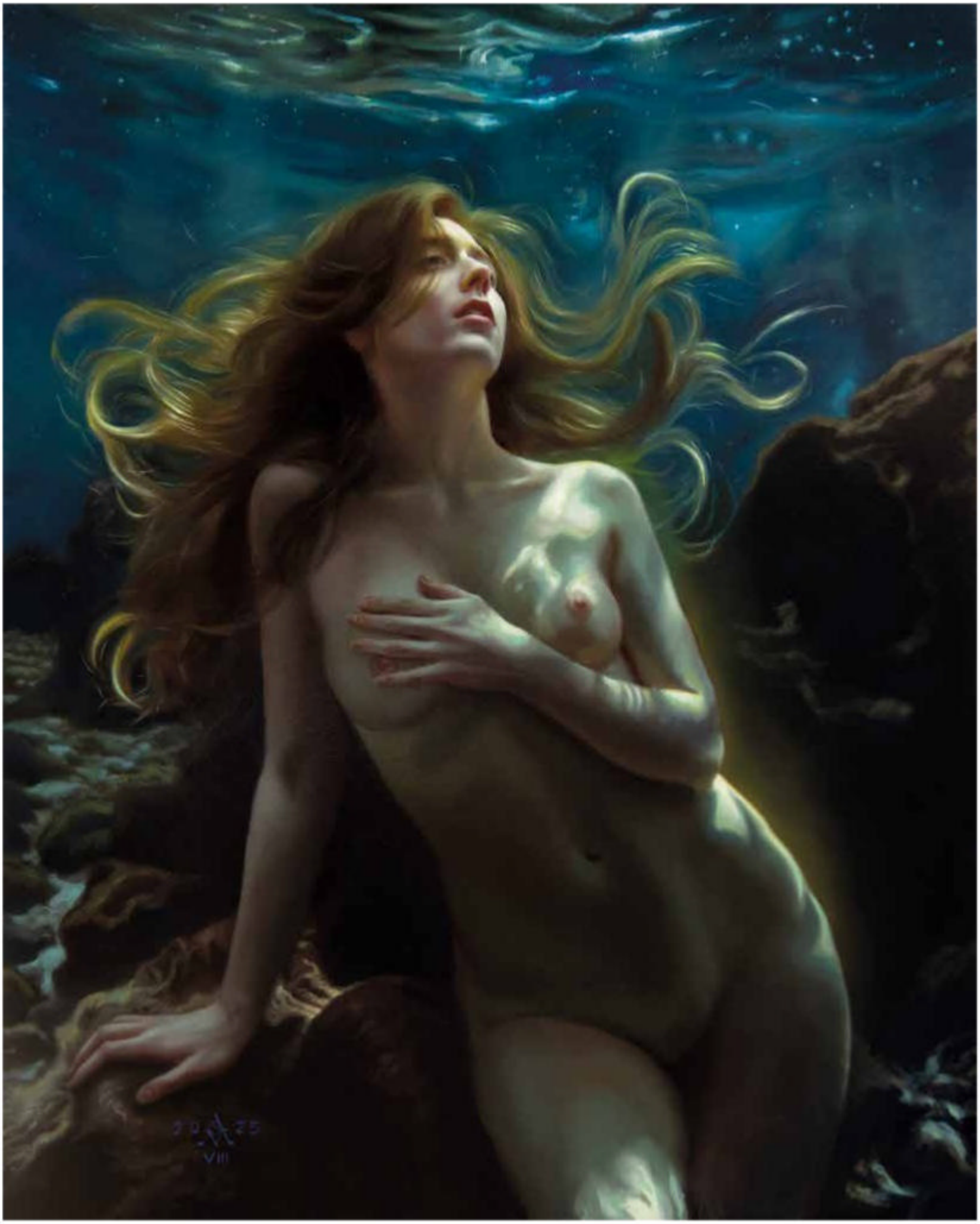
finding items at a local thrift store for his composition ideas. "Still life artists slowly become small time hoarders, and any time spent in thrift shops or antique stores is on par with any Indiana Jones adventure," says Davis. "Things are stacked and arranged in perfect disorder. It's then that something will catch my eye and become the perfect subject for the story running through my head. It's like putting a puzzle together with objects and symbolism as the pieces."

For this painting, the elegance of the sculpture with the light hitting just right, caught Davis's attention. "I loved its dynamic contrast in textures—the duality of a perfectly smooth, sculpted duck on the rough, naturalness of driftwood," he



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adds. "Two snail shells collected on walks became representatives of time slowing down allowing us to appreciate beauty. Ginger, [my pet mouse], is a recurring character in my paintings, and I've always thought in some way, represents me. I'll sculpt little mice out of clay to place in my arrangements, then look through my photo catalog to find a pose of Ginger that I can use for the details."

Lastly, we explore the figurative and symbolic piece *Nereide (Threshold)*, by Angelo Salmoiraghi. "The subjects I most often explore are female figures suspended between reality and allegory, immersed in timeless atmospheres where narrative blends with an interior and metaphysical dimension," explains Salmoiraghi.

The artist continues, "*Nereide (Threshold)* interprets a liminal condition through the myth of the sea nymph, a being suspended between worlds, between depth and emergence, between instinct and consciousness. It is not simply an underwater scene but the visualization of an interior state that is either rising to the surface or sinking beneath it—a moment of suspension. The word 'threshold' is central to the entire composition."

Technically, Salmoiraghi constructed the 12-by-9-inch painting through layered transparencies: floating hair, filtered light, gentle refractions, and the challenge was to create atmospheric depth in a small format. The figure is the result of numerous studies and notes, drawings, experiments and inner imagery that settled over time.

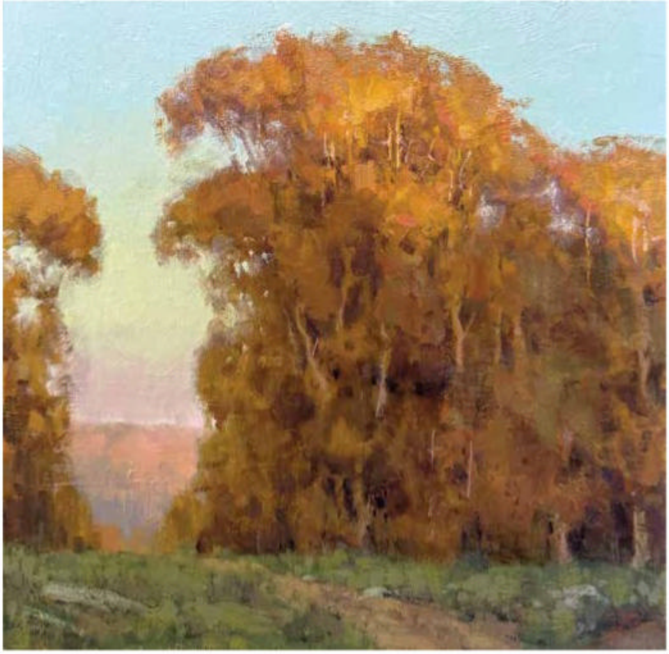
Experience the entire show at Principle Gallery's Alexandria, Virginia, location, from December 6, 2025 through January 5, 2026. A reception will be held on the opening day, from 1 to 4 p.m. ●

Principle Gallery 208 King Street • Alexandria, VA 22314 • (703) 739-9326 • www.principlegallery.com

3
Angelo Salmoiraghi, *Nereide (Threshold)*, oil on panel, 12 x 9 in.

4
Benjamin Walter, *As Autumn Slips By*, oil on canvas on board, 16 x 16 in.

5
Laura E. Pritchett, *Below the Bridge*, acrylic on panel, 10 x 10 in.



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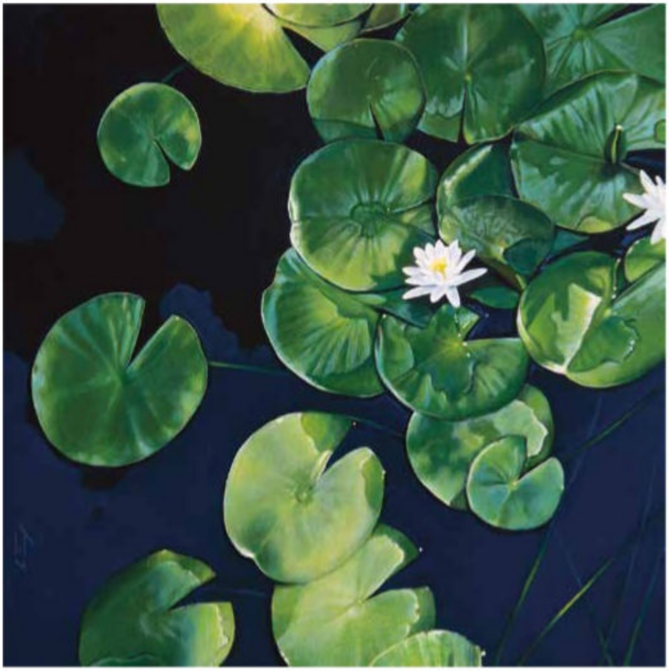

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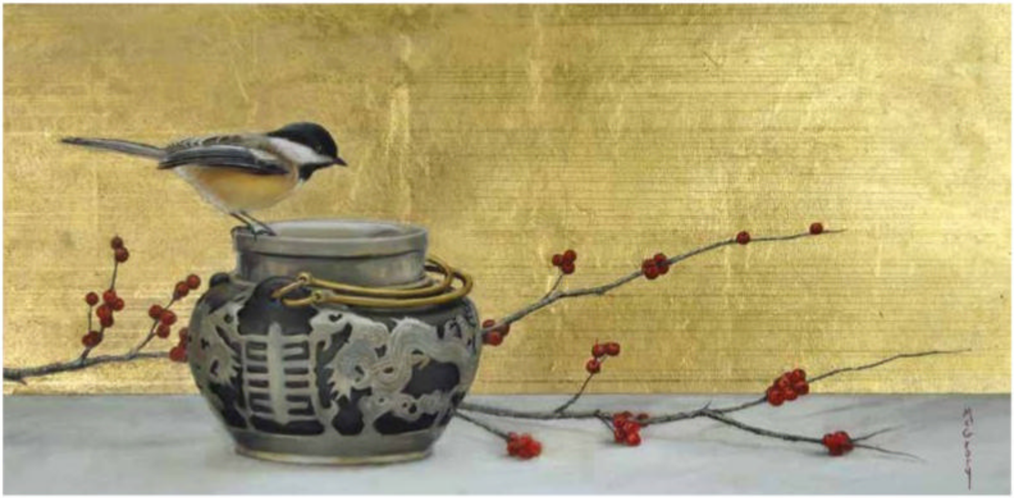
Winter Wonderland

By Sarah Gianelli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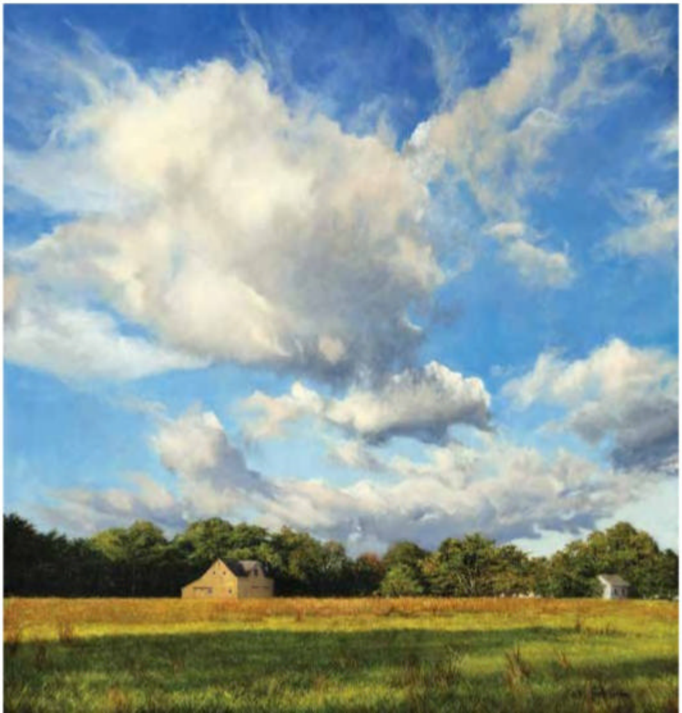
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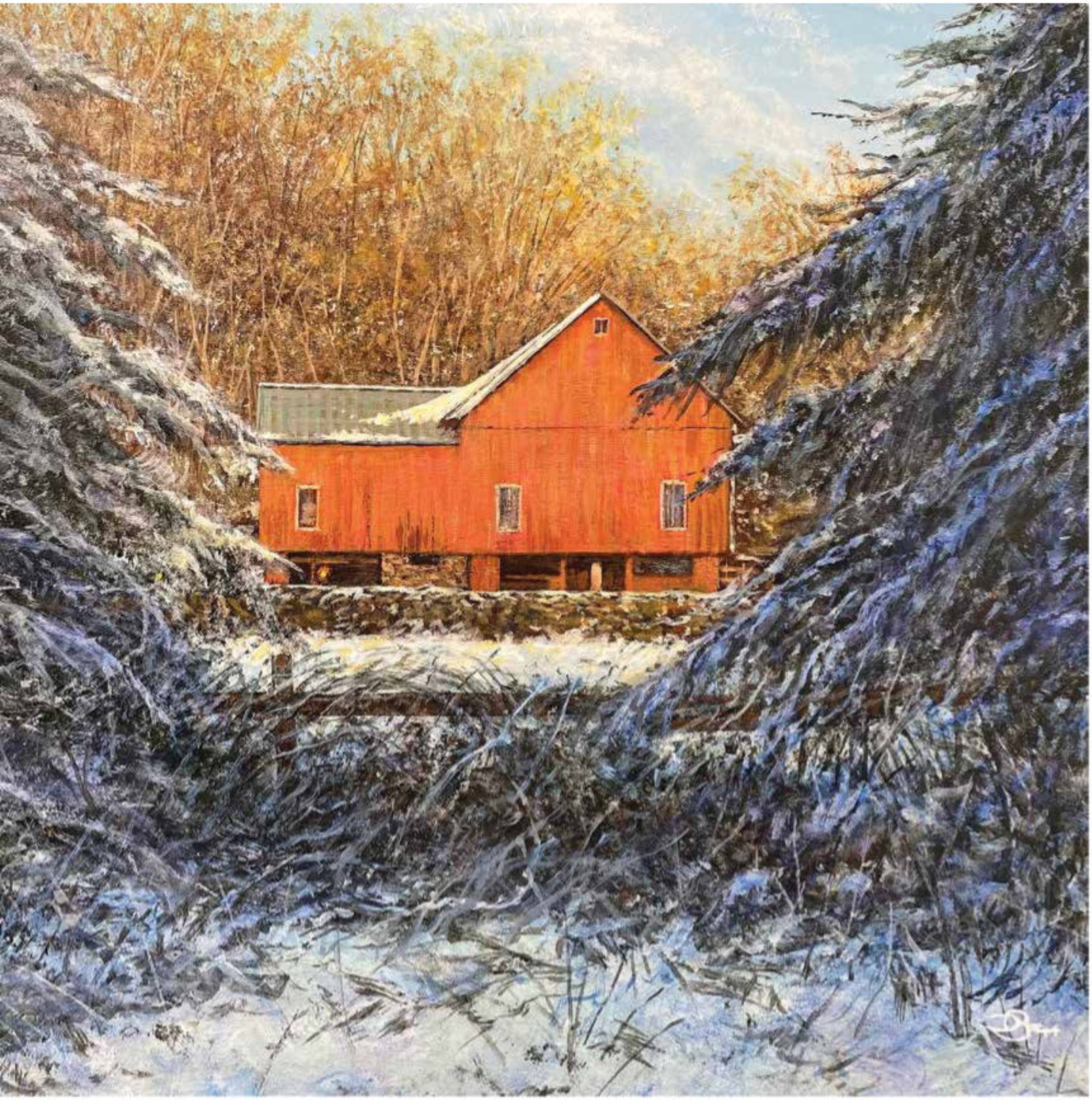
Susan Powell Fine Art represents many top-tier artists in the world of contemporary realism, and four times a year, the gallery pulls out all the stops to showcase the full breadth of their talent. Winter ushers in the gallery's *Annual Holiday Show*, featuring a selection of 75 large- and small-scale oils and pastels by 35 award-winning artists, as well as others emerging onto the scene.

This year's exhibition includes works by Thomas Adkins, Kathy Anderson, Del-Bourree Bach, Nancy Bass, Paul Beebe, Julie Beck, Peter Bergeron, Zufar Bikbov, Kelly Birkenruth, David Dunlop, John Falato, Vincent Giarrano, Tom Hughes, Jim Laurino, Laura Grace Mastrangelo, Anne McGrory, Jonathan McPhillips, Jim McVicker, Leonard Mizerek, Stan Moeller, Mo Myra, Cora Ogden, Larry Preston, Deborah Quinn-Munson, Jeanne Rosier Smith, Kyle Stuckey, Laura Westlake and Christopher Zhang. With subjects that range from bucolic landscapes and enchanting seascapes to exquisite still lifes, florals, wildlife, figurative works and cityscapes, Susan Powell Fine Art's



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Annual Holiday Show has a piece that will speak to every collector.

Among the show's scenic landscapes is Bach's *Season Finale*, which depicts one of the artist's favorite farms in North Stonington, Connecticut. "I have painted it many times, in all weather, seasons and times of day," shares Bach. "As this barn faces west, the way the late afternoon light hits it is spectacular on a crisp, late winter day. The pines on either side provide a theatrical touch and reveal the scene almost like a curtain opening on a stage set...There is work going on in the barn still, and I hope viewers will come up with their own stories and enjoy the view behind the curtain."

Another serene Connecticut landscape is Ogden's oil *Summer Pasture*, which was inspired by hiking the beaches and paths along the shoreline. "I climbed a small bluff on the Lieutenant River where it meets the Sound and stepped into an incredible pastoral scene," Ogden recounts. "Rough meadow grasses stretched toward the horizon, meeting majestic trees and old farm buildings. Overhead, an intense

1
Anne McGrory, *One for Tea*, pastel and gold leaf, 10 x 20 in.

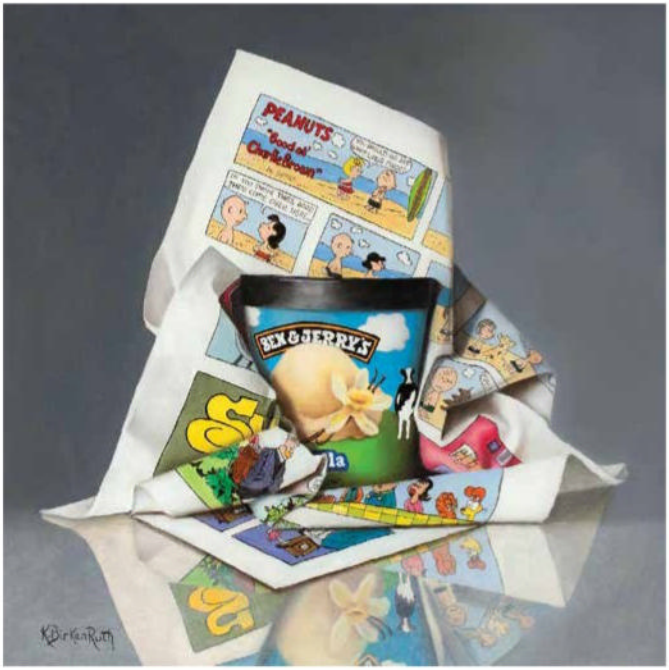
2
Cora Ogden, *Summer Pasture*, oil, 36 x 34 in.

3
Del-Bourree Bach, *Season Finale*, acrylic, 8 x 8 in.

blue late summer sky filled with massive clouds swept in from the coast. I had to paint this quintessential New England summer moment."

A master handler of light, Preston will be showing one of his signature citrus still life paintings. "I paint tangerines and other citrus often, and I usually put them in glass because I love the reflections and the light," says Preston, who often places his subject against an inky background to draw attention to the fruit.

The idea for *One for Tea* was a vivid image in McGrory's imagination long before she had the reference material to bring it to life on the canvas. She arranged her dragon teapot, one of her favorite objects to paint, on a table beneath bird feeders, turning the spout away so it wouldn't appear in the composition. A few sprigs of winterberries from nearby completed the setup. "The chickadees in my yard are fearless and curious, quick to investigate anything new," says McGrory. "Even before I placed seeds inside the pot, they were already fluttering in. I spent hours photographing and sketching as they came by for a snack. One particular chickadee kept returning, full of personality and charm. I caught him just as he



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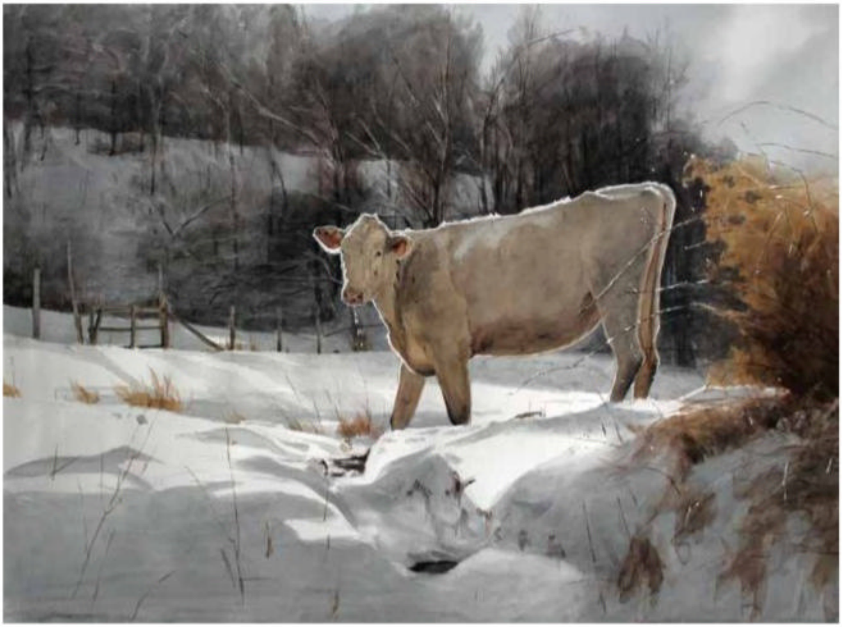

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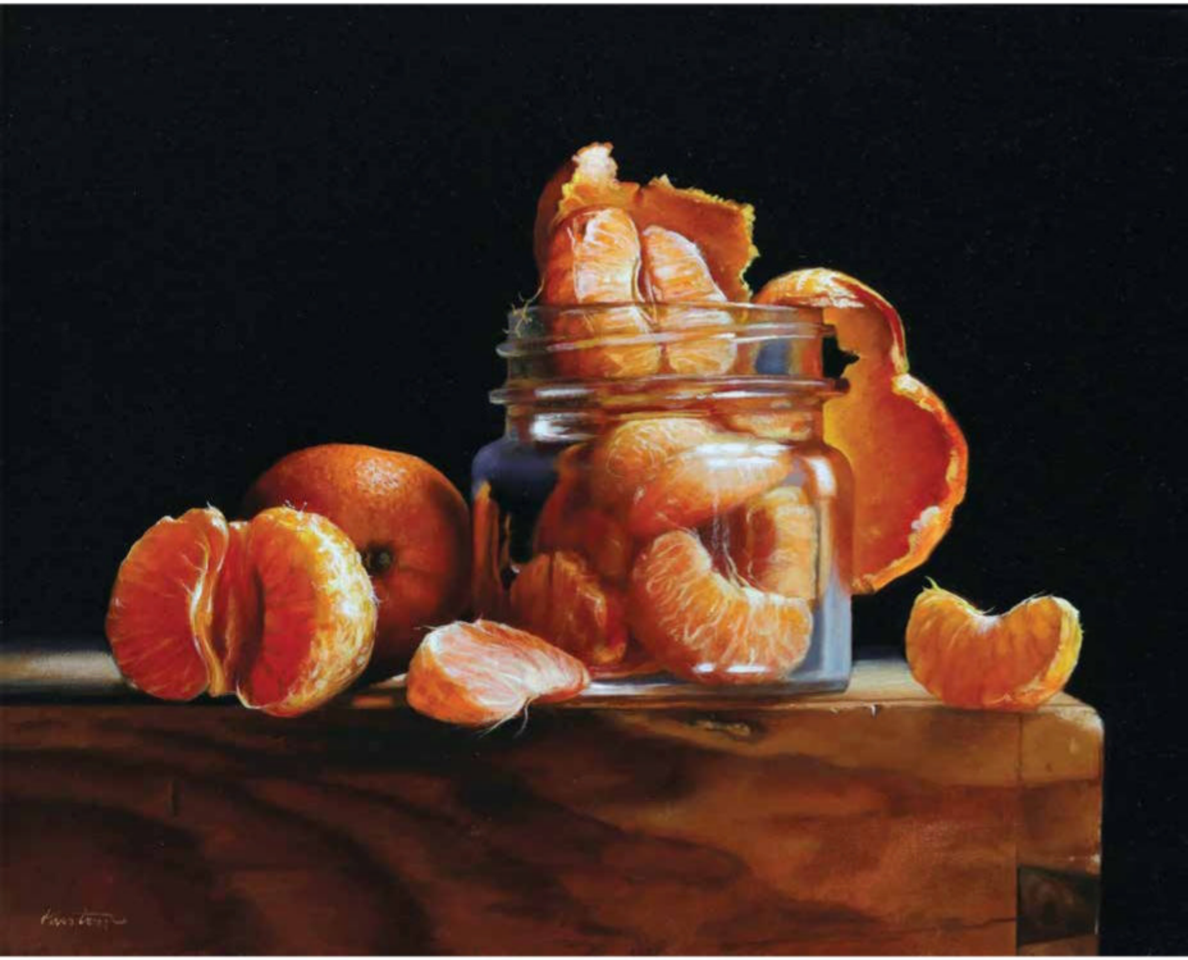
4
Kelly Birkenruth, *Frozen Funnies*, oil, 12 x 12 in.

5
Mo Myra, *Fields of Plenty*, watercolor, 20 x 30 in.

6
Larry Preston, *Tangerines*, oil, 11 x 14 in.



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landed, his wings not yet folded under, and he had the most confident attitude as he looked right at me." McGrory incorporated gold leaf for its warmth and luminosity, to complement the soft golden tones of the bird's belly and to heighten the contrast with the vivid red of the winterberries. "I love combining pastel with gold leaf in my paintings to give a precious and majestic quality to the common birds we all see every day," she adds. "My hope is to share with the viewer the beauty in nature that often go unnoticed in our busy lives."

Myra's *Fields of Plenty* is a picture of a backlit white cow drinking water in a winter field. "Some paintings have a way of finding you," says the artist. "I was walking along a farm field with a friend to scope out a spot to plein air paint when this gorgeous white cow grabbed my attention. The light was bouncing off her while she drank water from the snowy field. The poetry of the moment reminded me of hard times in my life where even when things were rough, I still somehow got by with what I needed. My goal has always been to share the happiness and contentment I experience through watercolor."

Susan Powell Fine Art's *Annual Holiday Showcase* is currently on view and hangs through January 3, 2026. ●

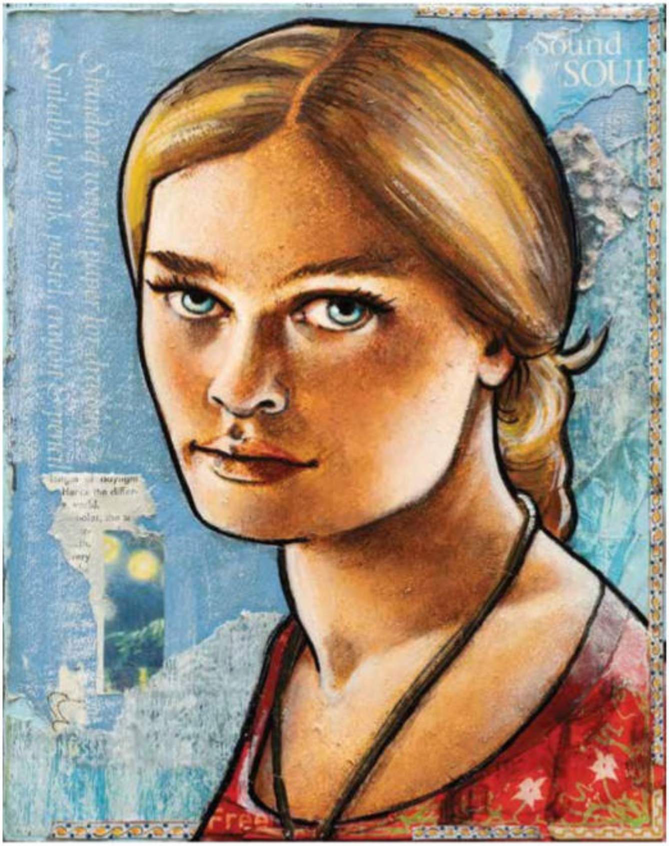
Susan Powell Fine Art 679 Boston Post Road • Madison, CT 06443 • (203) 318-0616 • www.susanpowellfineart.com

Tiny Treasures

By Sarah Gianelli

This holiday season, Blue Rain Gallery presents another opportunity to build up your small works collection or that of a loved one with its *Annual Miniature Works Show*. The event, which takes place at their Santa Fe location from November 28 through December 9, will showcase many gallery artists including Deladier Almeida, Karen Clarkson, Erin Currier, Tony De Luz, Hyrum Joe, Robin Jones, Chris Pappan, Paige Pierson, Mark Pugh, Kathryn Stedham, Helen K. Tindel, Dennis Ziemienski and others. Collectors can expect a diverse selection of contemporary realism, as well as Native American and Western art—all 12 by 12 inches or smaller.

Among the offerings is a rare, small-scale still life by hyperrealist painter Lew Brennan. “*Martini Time* is an oil on canvas painting that makes up a part of my *Name Your Poison* series that I started years ago and is ongoing,” explains Brennan. “It all started with a charcoal and chalk drawing of a coffee plunger pot and coffee mug in charcoal and chalk. The challenge to capture the stainless steel plunger in the morning sunlight as well as the reflection of the mug was what interested me...The *Name Your Poison* series has something for everyone in that we all drink something, whether it’s tea, coffee or something stronger. I think the 12 by 12 format is very well received because of the size, which easily fits all homes, and the prices are generally lower, which makes them more affordable for more art lovers. That’s a good thing for sure.”



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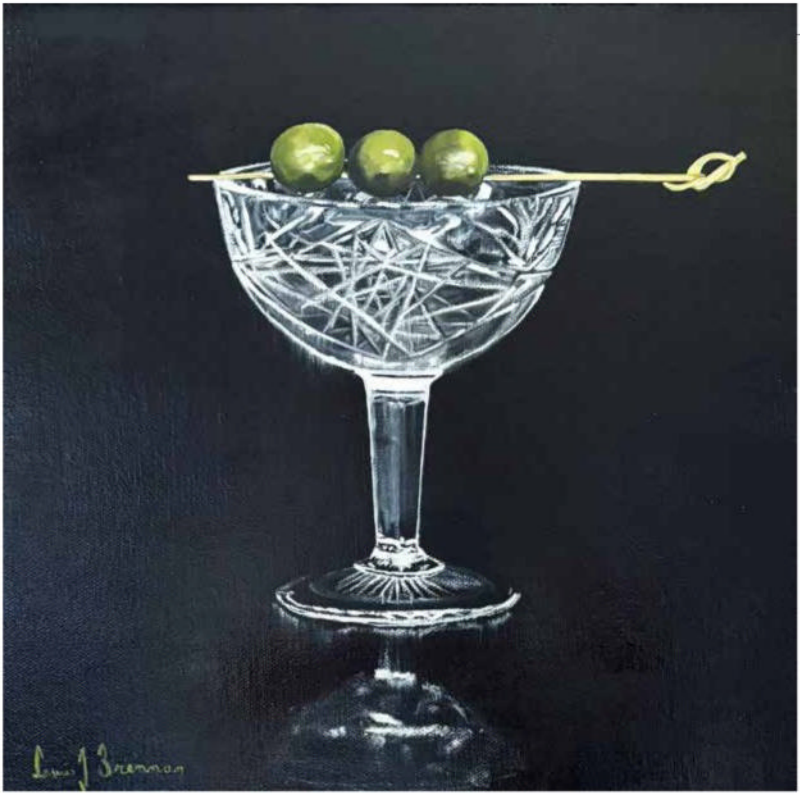
Erin Currier, whose mixed-media pieces incorporate post-consumer ephemera, will be presenting small homages to artists Agnes Pelton (1881-1961) and Betye Saar. “I feel a particular kinship to Agnes Pelton, a fellow nomad who travelled extensively and lived for long stretches abroad,” says Currier. “Like me, she was interested in and informed by mysticism, spirituality, and Eastern philosophy. We also share in common the inspiration we found in Taos, New Mexico, and the American Southwest in general, where our respective creative work transformed and evolved. I feel a connection to Betye Saar on several levels: like me, she uses assemblage, collage and mixed media, to reflect upon spirituality and the connectedness between different cultures.”

Find these small gems and so many more at Blue Rain Gallery’s *Annual Miniature Works Show*, which opens with an artist reception on Friday, November 28 from 5 to 7 p.m.

“We’re proud to present our *Annual Miniature Works Show*, featuring many of Blue Rain Gallery’s renowned artists,” says marketing director Leah Garcia. “This exhibition is a wonderful opportunity for collectors to acquire new pieces or find meaningful gifts for loved ones... These small-scale works highlight the remarkable mastery and creativity of our artists in an accessible and intimate format.” ●

Blue Rain Gallery 544 S. Guadalupe Street • Santa Fe, NM 87501 • (505) 954-9902 • www.blueraingallery.com



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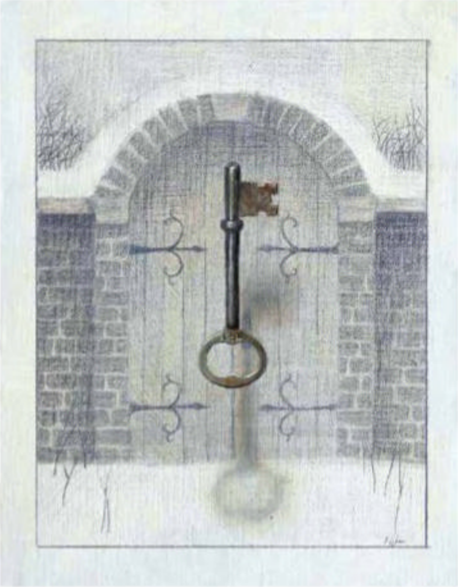
1
Erin Currier, *Agnes Pelton*, acrylic and mixed media on panel, 10 x 8 in.

2
Lew Brennan, *Martini Time*, oil on canvas, 12 x 12 in.

3
Mark Pugh, *The Key to the Back Gate*, oil on graphite on linen, 10 x 8 in.

4
Dennis Ziemienski, *Billy's Boots*, oil on canvas board, 10 x 8 in.



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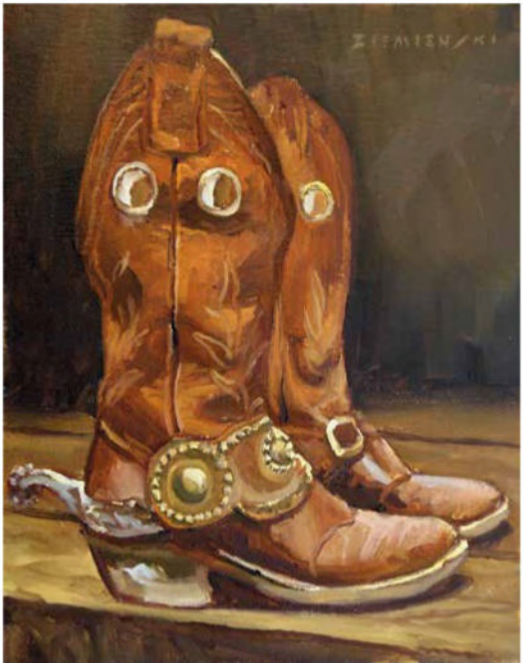

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TIMOTHY REES

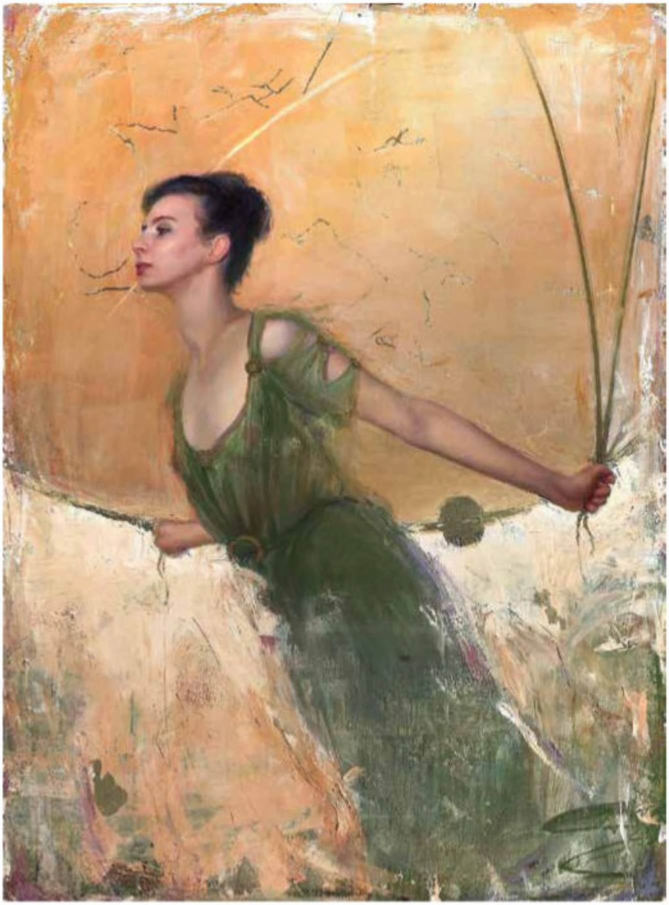
Gilded Souls

By Michael Clawson

For Timothy Rees' newest solo show at Bonner David Galleries in Scottsdale, Arizona, the painter says that his work is evolving in exciting ways, including in the areas of paint, subject, composition and also in an unlikely direction as he adds gold leaf to his paintings.

The glimmering medium is famously fussy: even an imperceptible breeze can make it impossible to handle, moisture and skin oils can gum it up, static can tear it, special tools are needed just to work with it and, because it's gold, the thin sheets (estimated at 300 atoms thick) ain't cheap. These are all flashing warning signs, but Rees plowed through them. In other professions this is called recklessness, but in art it's called exploration.

"I actually started working with gold a long time ago, around 2010. I was building my own frames for my shows in Chicago at the Palette & Chisel. I learned leafing there so that I could gold leaf some of my frames. Then, flash forward to maybe six or seven years ago, I was gold leafing in the studio and I also went to a competition at the Academy of Realist Art in Boston. It was a one week figure-painting competition. And so I painted the model and then I incorporated gold leafing into that painting. And that painting itself has become a major influence on the work for this show," Rees says. "I see this show as an evolution. I'm combining that heavy abstraction and a variety of paint applications, but then also the gold leafing that adds another layer of interest."



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The title of the show, *Gilded Souls*, which opens December 4, even refers to the gold elements in the new works. New pieces include *Apprehension*, in which the gold leaf dances at the edge of the figure. In other works, such as *Cocoon*, the gold leaf is applied in layers that mimic large brushstrokes, each one catching the light from a different angle.

The artist is also challenging himself by creating new kinds of texture on the surface of his paintings. "I've always tried to push texture as far as I can go with it and not let my OCD want to smooth it out. And so this show has been a good chance for me to push myself in that direction even further and experiment with just how far I can go," he says.

The show will feature around 20 new works, including several large paintings. A reception will be held on opening day from 6 to 9 p.m. and will remain on view through December 31 in Scottsdale. ●

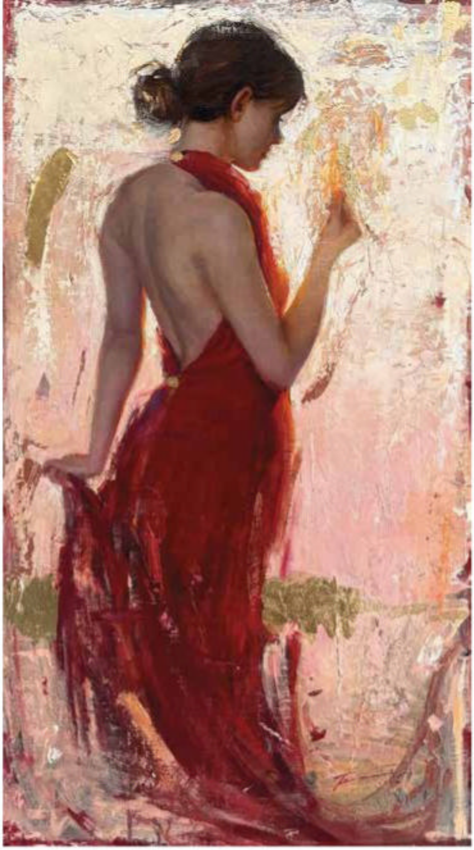
Bonner David Galleries 7040 E. Main Street •
Scottsdale, AZ 85251 • (480) 941-8500 •
www.bonnerdavid.com

1
Atlas, oil and 18K gold on linen, 48 x 36 in.

2
Creation, oil and 24K gold on linen panel, 32 x 18 in.

3
Apprehension, oil and 24K gold on linen panel, 24 x 16 in.

4
Cocoon, oil and 18K, 22K and 24K gold on linen panel, 24 x 40 in.



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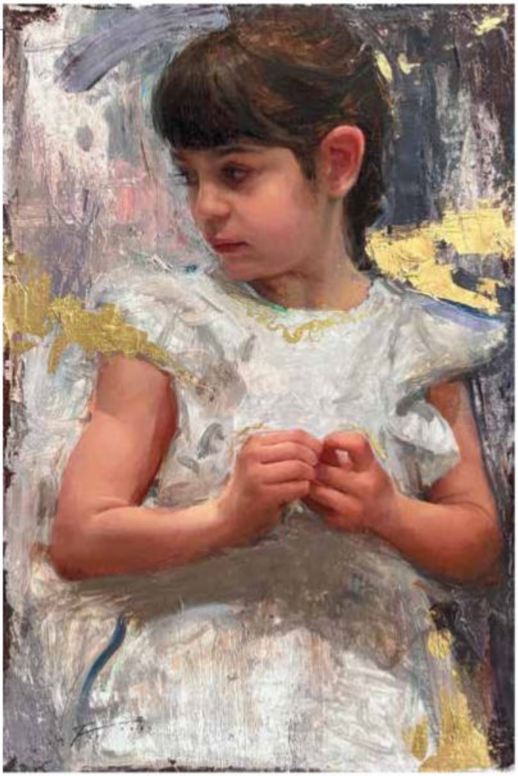

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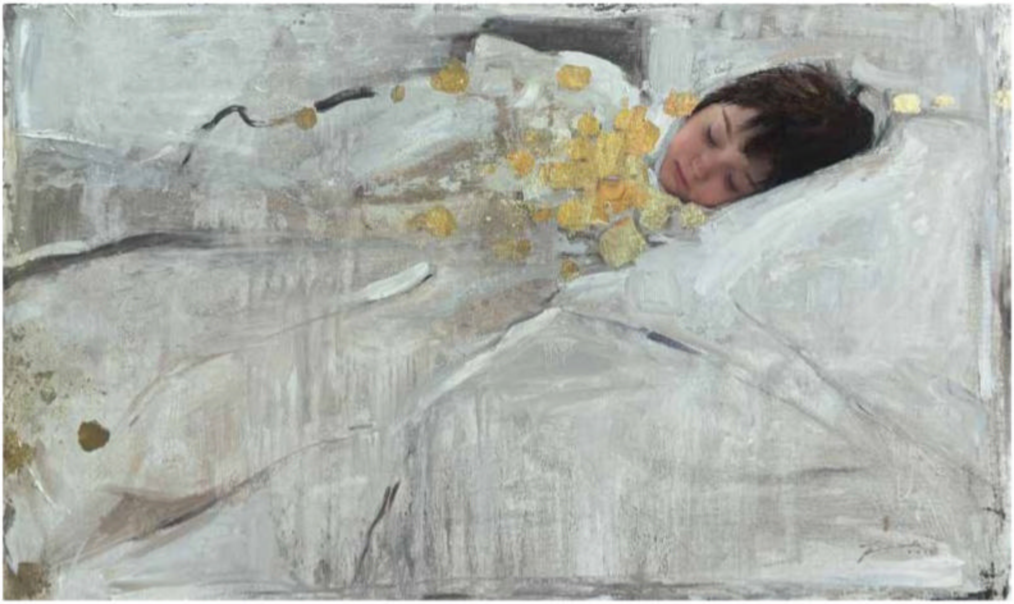

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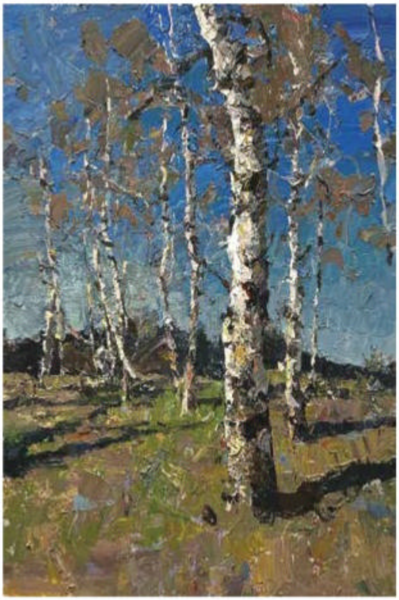
TAD RETZ

Meant to Be

By Sarah Gianelli



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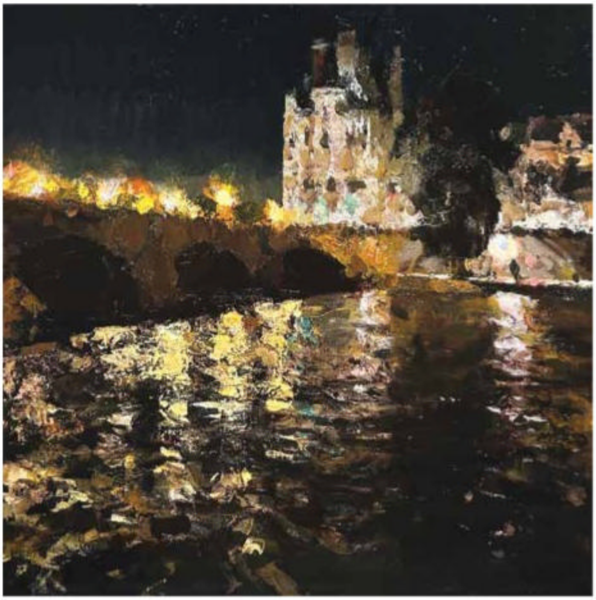

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Looking back over the past 10 years, around which time he started to pursue becoming a professional painter in earnest, Tad Retz sees his artistic evolution in a series of three major breakthroughs—all related to the teacher he was studying with at the time.

His first mentor was Vermont impressionist painter Mark Boedges who was influenced by the teachings of artist Richard Schmid. It was Retz's introduction to painting from life. A couple years later, he was invited by John Burton to study with him in Carmel, California. "The big takeaway [from my time with John] was learning to see form three-dimensionally and how to apply it on a two-dimensional surface," Retz says. "It was a huge breakthrough for me."

Retz became fascinated with the underpaintings in his work, more aggressive with the paint and more bold with his brushwork. "John had this teaching of his where he'd say, 'I may not be right, but I am certain.' I took on that mentality. For me, it means if you are very bold with your decision-making, you might be a little off with color or the edges, but if you're really certain about it, and if you put it down really boldly, you can get away with it."

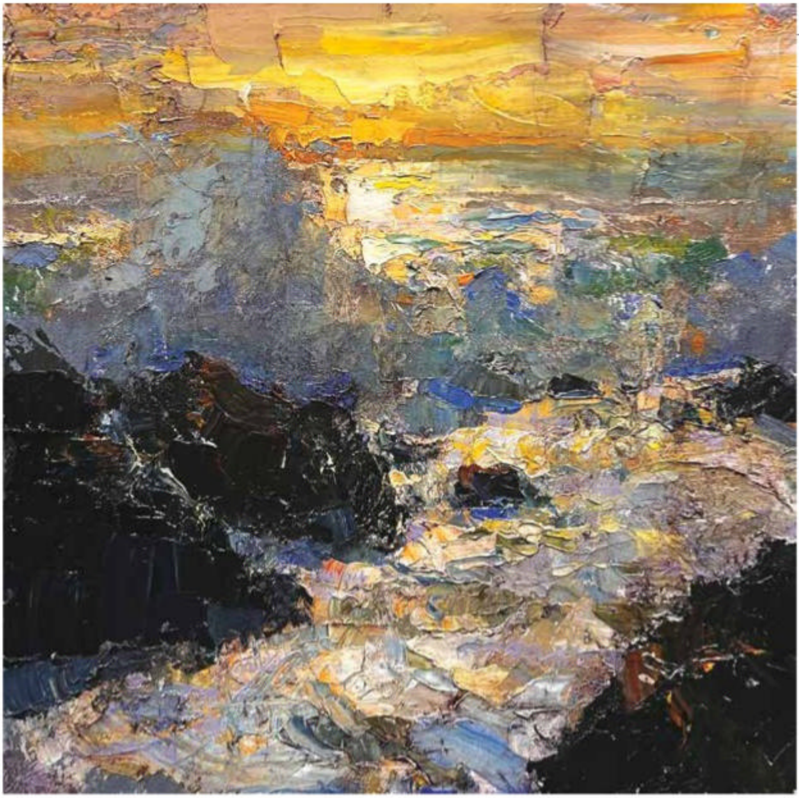
Retz, who is only 29, expresses genuine gratitude for all of his teachers, but his ongoing relationship with celebrated impressionist C.W. Mundy has been especially impactful, and has deepened into more than a teacher-student dynamic. Mundy, who turns 80 this year, calls Retz his adopted grandson.

"It's been mind-blowing meeting and working with C.W.," says Retz. "He got me working bigger, using palette knives. I wanted to combine two looks and he helped me bridge that gap. My paintings are loose again, but there's still form...He's in Indiana and I'm in New York, so most of our feedback is through Facetime, but we talk nearly every day...It's a very special friendship.

"All of this started about halfway through my senior year of high school," Retz says about this series of mentorships. "I was able to study with very specific painters for very specific reasons, some of it worked out on its own through happenstance, but I feel like it was all meant to be. It seems like the artists I learned from saw what I needed and helped me in a very selfless way."

Retz's latest body work, comprised of seascapes, landscapes, florals and other familiar scenes from his travels and others closer to home, embody the delicate balance Retz endeavors to strike. From a distance, works like *Maine Sunset* are recognizable as a landscape, but when you get up close, they collapse into thick layers of painterly abstraction.

"Looking at it from 10 feet away, that's when it will look most real," says Retz. "As you get closer, you can appreciate the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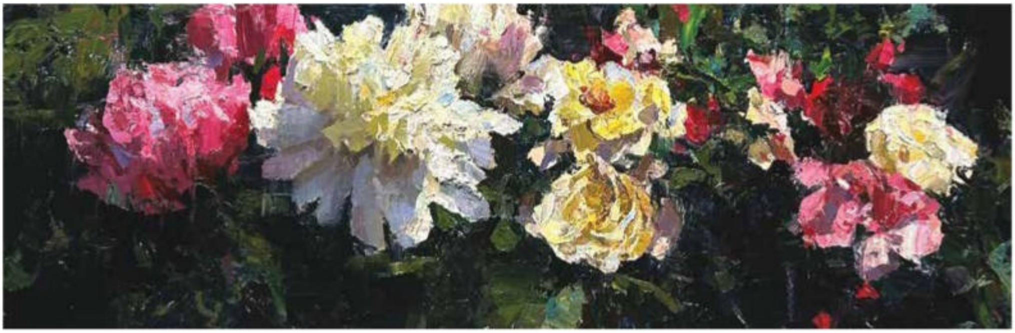
1
Autumn Birch Trees, oil, 24 x 16 in.

2
The Louvre at Night, oil, 36 x 36 in.

3
Maine Sunset, oil, 12 x 12 in.

4
Roses and Peonies, oil, 11 x 33 in.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abstraction—the whole painting is just loose nothingness up close, in a sense. It's nice to know that it will read believable as you're walking around your house and you don't have to be right up close to appreciate its realism. I like to find a sense of realism through working abstractly."

For Retz, walking the line of believability is very personal: "Does that painting from across the room remind me of being in that place? Does it feel like a memory? Does the scene have a sense of the moment?

"If a painting leans too abstract or too caricatured or graphic, or if the colors are too crazy, it starts to lose the believability," Retz adds. "I like my paintings to be a little more tonal and feel like memories of the locations where they're painted from."

Retz's latest paintings will be featured in *Chronicles*, an exhibition at Paul Scott Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona, that opens with an artist reception on December 4 from 7 to 9 p.m. and hangs through December 18. ●

Paul Scott Gallery 7103 E. Main Street • Scottsdale, AZ 85251 • (480) 596-9533 • www.paulscottgallery.com

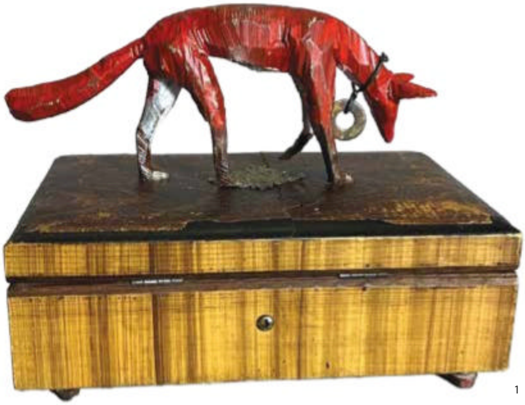
Something for Everyone

By Alyssa M. Tidwell

A holiday tradition in Santa Fe, Giacobbe-Fritz Fine Art's annual *Small Works Show* features new works by 20 gallery artists—with all pieces measuring 20 inches or smaller. The show offers both serious collectors and casual art lovers the opportunity to acquire original artworks at more affordable price points.

Among the artists in the 2025 show are Rebecca Haines, Geoffrey Gorman, Melinda K. Hall, Justin Wheatley, David Tyndall, Wendeline Matson, Mary Alayne Thomas and more.

Haines' *From the Same Cloth* is a portrait of a deer and a raven. While the painting was created with oils, the artist makes it appear as though other materials like crayons and pencils were used. "Deer and raven are two of the wild creatures I most identify with. In fact, I often tell people that I'm a deer trying to be a human, and that's why life can feel so hard. And also, if I could come back in another life as a different animal, it would be a raven," says Haines.



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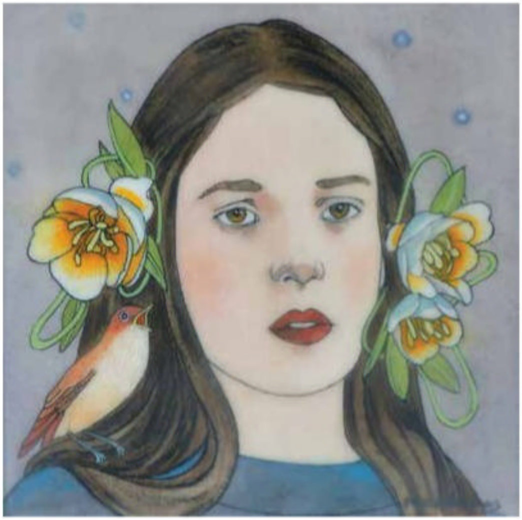

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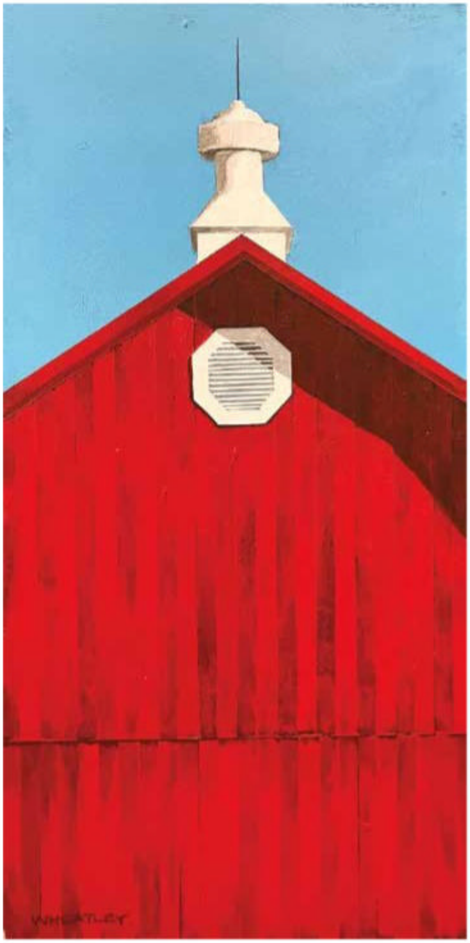

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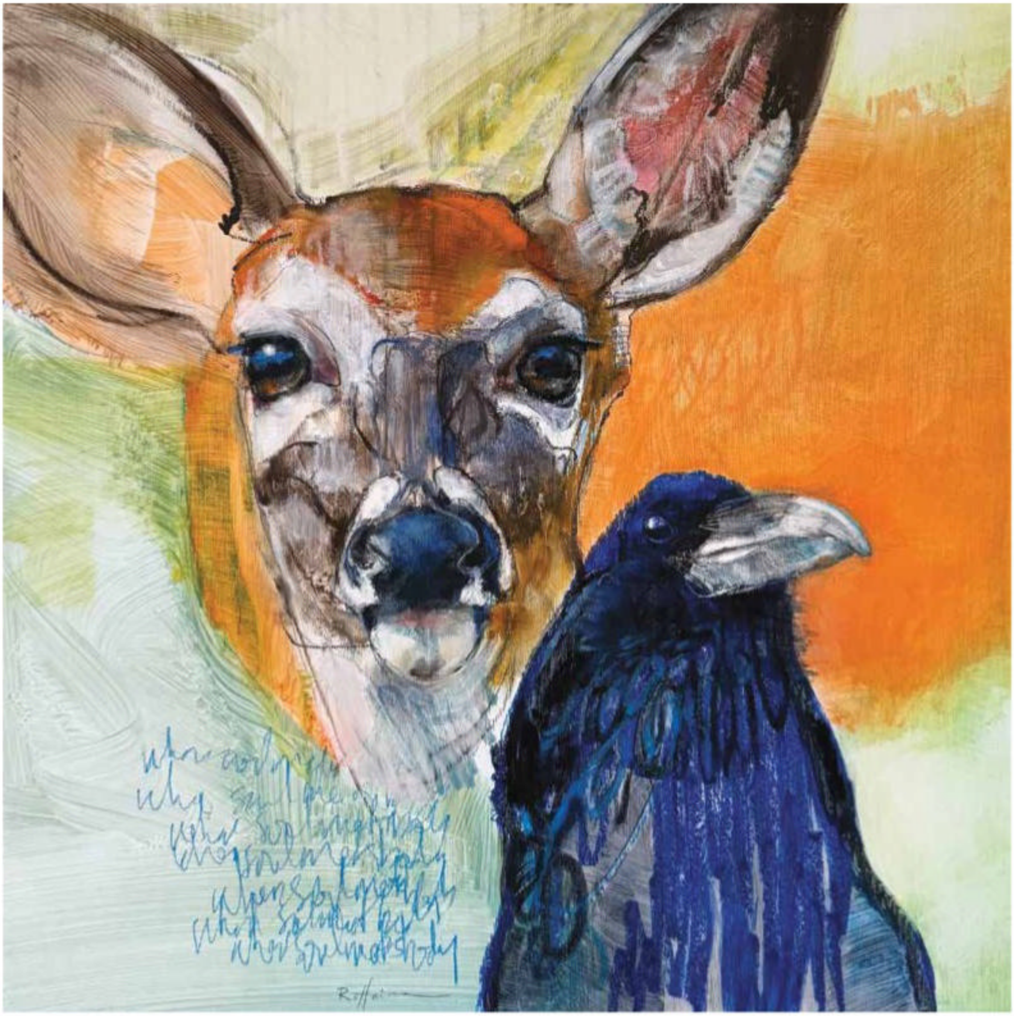

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"When I create a painting, I just start making marks. I usually don't have a pre-existing plan for where the piece will go. It's an open-ended back and forth visual conversation between the image and myself... I believe that we humans are just another animal upon the earth, equal to the other wild beings. We are all cut from the same cloth, as it were."

Crafted from both clay and found objects, Gorman's bronze sculpture *On the Scent* depicts a red fox in motion. "This is a small bronze piece that I hope captures the animal instincts of every wild animal," he says. "This red fox depends on its ability to identify every smell that it comes across. For [the fox], it is life and death. I believe animals are just like humans. Or I should say, maybe humans are just like animals, but we've kind of elevated ourselves and made ourselves feel more important. I'm using my animals as a metaphor of the human condition."

"The *Small Works Show* is one of my favorite exhibitions of the year," says gallery owner Deborah Fritz. "There's something magical about how much expression and craftsmanship our artists can pack into such a small space. These pieces may be little, but they're full of heart and they offer something for everyone."

The show opens Friday, December 5, and hangs through the end of the year. ●

Giacobbe-Fritz Fine Art 702 Canyon Road • Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 986-1156 • www.giacobbefritz.com

1
Geoffrey Gorman, *On the Scent*, bronze and found objects, 6 x 8 x 5 in.

2
Mary Alayne Thomas, *The Lark Summoned the Stars*, watercolor and encaustic, 6 x 6 in.

3
Justin Wheatley, *Middletown*, acrylic on panel, 12 x 6 in.

4
Rebecca Haines, *From the Same Cloth*, oil on panel, 18 x 18 in.

UPCOMING SHOW PREVIEW / T.H. BRENNEN FINE ART
12/4-12/31 Scottsdale, AZ

Small Originals

By Chelsea Koressel

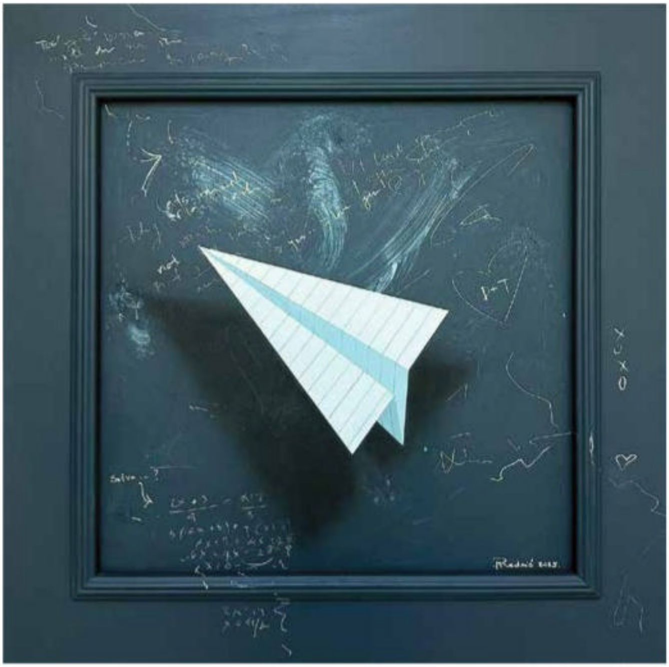
Returning to Scottsdale, Arizona, in early December is T.H. Brennen Fine Art's *Annual 12 x 12 Holiday Show*, featuring fresh, quality works created in a 12-by-12-inch format. These small works, varying in subject matter, style and medium, are designed to "surprise and inspire," just in time for the holiday season.

"This annual event invites emerging artists to showcase 12-by-12-inch works alongside celebrated gallery regulars," says gallery director Jennifer Golubiewski. "This is a rare chance to collect small-format originals from top names. The show opens during Scottsdale's iconic Thursday night art walk, when Main Street galleries keep their doors open late and the district buzzes with art lovers, music and conversation."

Realistic figurative oil painter Chris Dellorco presents work like *Comfort*, depicting a female figure. "This piece captures a moment of profound sadness, as a woman holds her head in despair, covered in black tulle fabric," the artist explains. "While the piece initially seems to be a very despondent emotional piece, there is a juxtaposition of a small sparrow seeming to offer comfort. I often use birds in my art to depict the voice in our heads that offers hope, no matter how small. I chose a sparrow specifically because it is so small and non-descript in coloring that we barely notice. And yet, they are always around us, like that small voice reminding ourselves that everything will be alright, even in our darkest moments."

Dellorco's use of fabric is also key to his work, creating a graphic focal point that adds a more fluid element to express motion. "In most of my paintings, the fabric interacts with the figure almost as another living element in the art," he shares.

Generally, Dellorco paints larger work, so to create a smaller piece he must view the space differently. "Strong composition is still the key, but it has to be simplified for a smaller size," he says. "There must be a simplicity of elements and a strong focal point to bring the viewer in and give the painting the attention it requires. In *Comfort*, the focal element is the hands,



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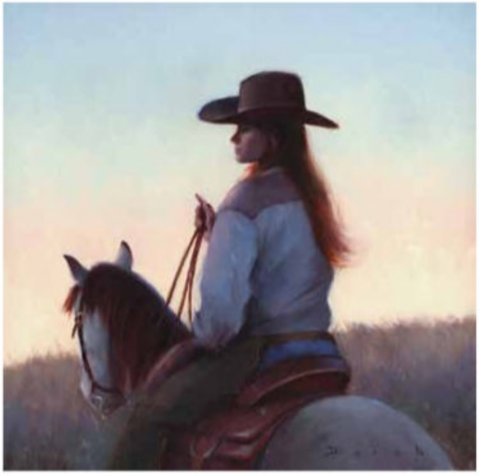

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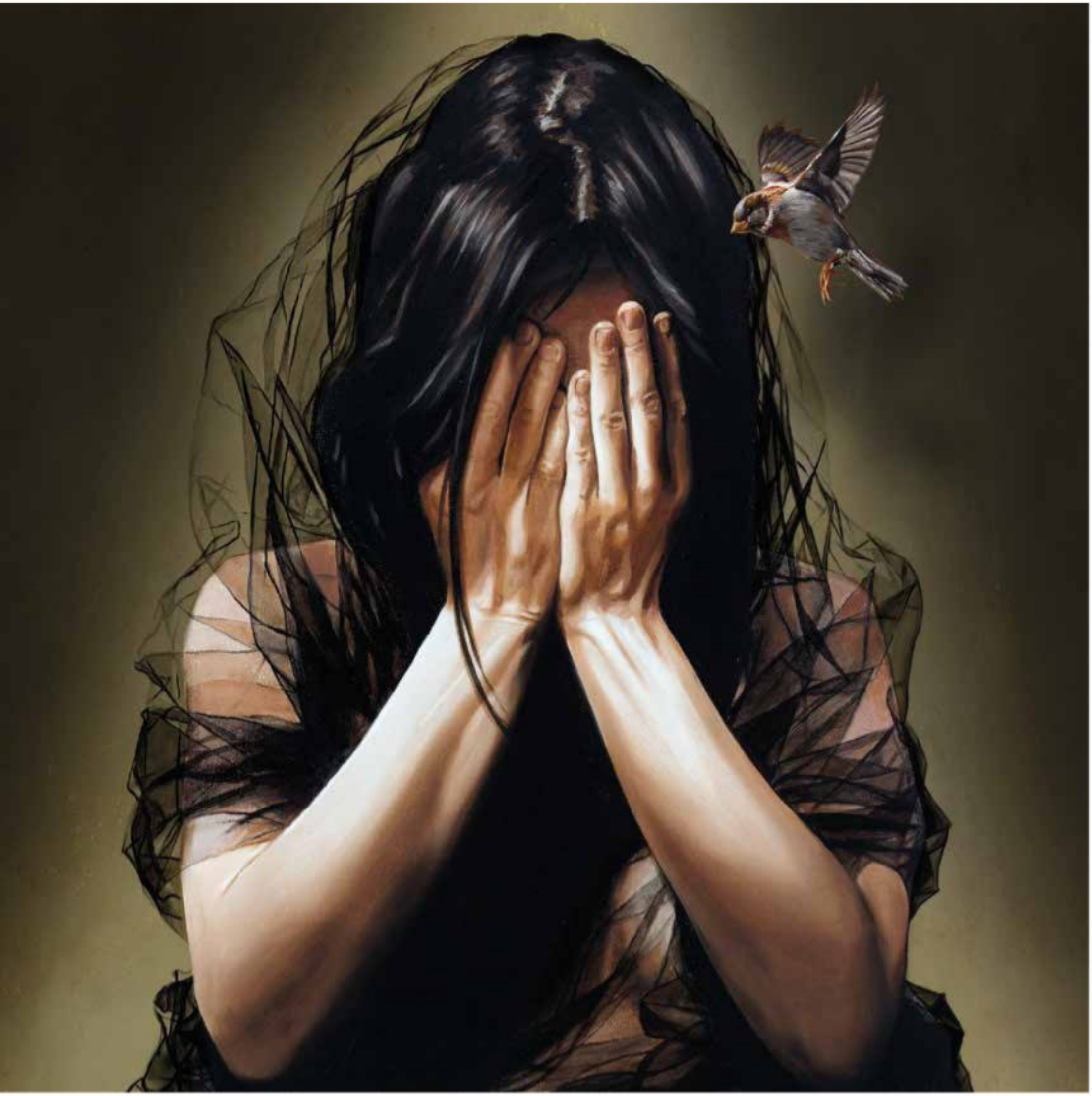
1
Marija (Maya) Redzic, *Memories 12*, acrylic on panel, 12 x 12 in.

2
Derek Harrison, *Twilight Ride*, oil on panel, 12 x 12 in.

3
Chris Dellorco, *Comfort*, oil, 12 x 12 in.



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which are almost lit in a spotlight effect."

Inspired by the interplay of light and shadow, the raw beauty of nature and the intricate dynamics of urban life, artist Marija (Maya) Redzic features work that's often created using unconventional materials and by using the technique known as trompe l'oeil. "My [show piece], *Memories 12*, is part of a vibrant, nostalgic body of work that rekindles the childlike curiosity we so quickly outgrow," Redzic adds. "It captures the fleeting poetry of school days, the excitement of a first kiss, the silence of a classroom pierced by a paper plane's gentle flight towards the one you had your eyes on."

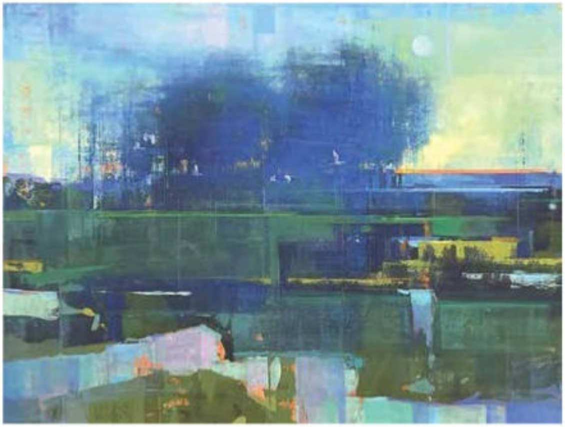
Redzic also shares insights on the challenges of working on a smaller scale. "Each doodle, each fragment of writing, must speak clearly, carrying both meaning and emotion," she says. "Yet this constraint often becomes a kind of liberation—once the vision takes shape in my mind, the piece (usually!) comes together much quicker than larger works do."

Visit T.H. Brennen Fine Art from December 4 through 31 to see the *Annual 12 x 12 Holiday Show* in its entirety. A reception will be held on December 11 from 6 to 9 p.m., during Scottsdale's art walk. ●

T.H. Brennen Fine Art 7150 E. Main Street
Scottsdale, AZ 85251 • (480) 994-1355
www.thbrennenfineart.com

Nature's Dialects

By Chelsea Koressel



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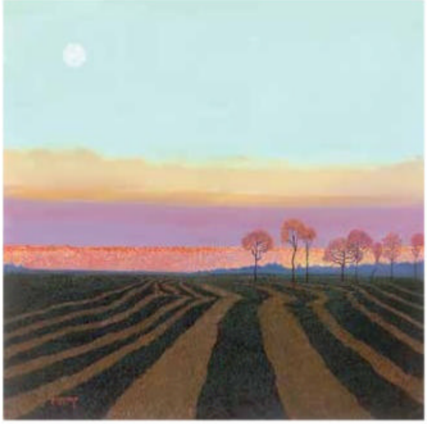

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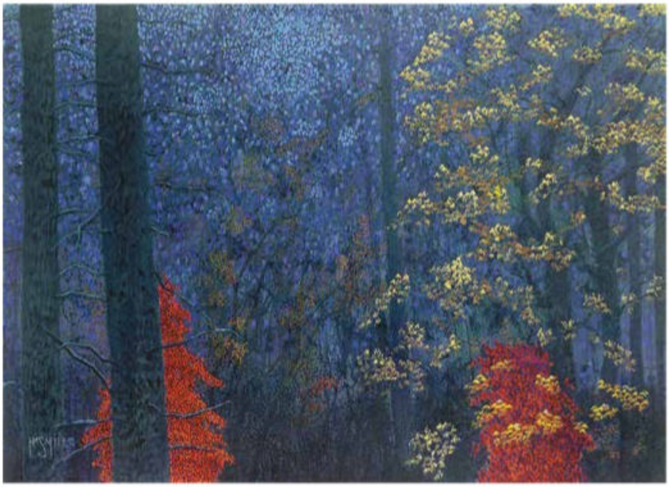
While many artists are known to garner inspiration from the natural world, how they translate it onto the canvas is manifold, offering unique perspectives, stories and interpretations. This is the case for Lily Pad Gallery West's grand showcase *Nature's Voice*, where three artists approach the same subject—the natural world—but reveal its different dimensions in their own distinct style and approach.

Julia Taylor, executive director at Lily Pad Gallery West, adds, "Christopher Groves invites you to stand beside him in the wilderness he's known since childhood; Christopher Pierce transforms his garden into art that commands your attention; and H.M. Saffer II brings an entirely unexpected perspective, filtering the natural world through decades of cross-cultural experience from Paris cafés to Japanese ink studios. Together, they prove that nature isn't just one voice—it's a conversation, and these three artists are fluent in entirely different dialects."

For years, Groves has painted in a more traditional style, however, over the last several years, he has explored and pushed into a semi-abstract arena—giving new energy and life to his landscape pieces. "For this show, I wanted a variety of that early style as well as the present style to help indicate time and growth," he says. "A few pieces have a combination of both traditional and abstract mark making, which begins to open up a whole world of new artistic avenues to explore."

One of Groves' show pieces, *Your Tomorrow*, is one of the pieces that emerged from this new exploration. The artist shares that he will often begin a painting by writing a poem to use as the main intention for the piece. "I wanted to place the viewer into 'nature's timeframe,' from past to present to future (your tomorrow), and let them have a dialogue together," says Groves.

For Pierce, nature is the "mother" of all



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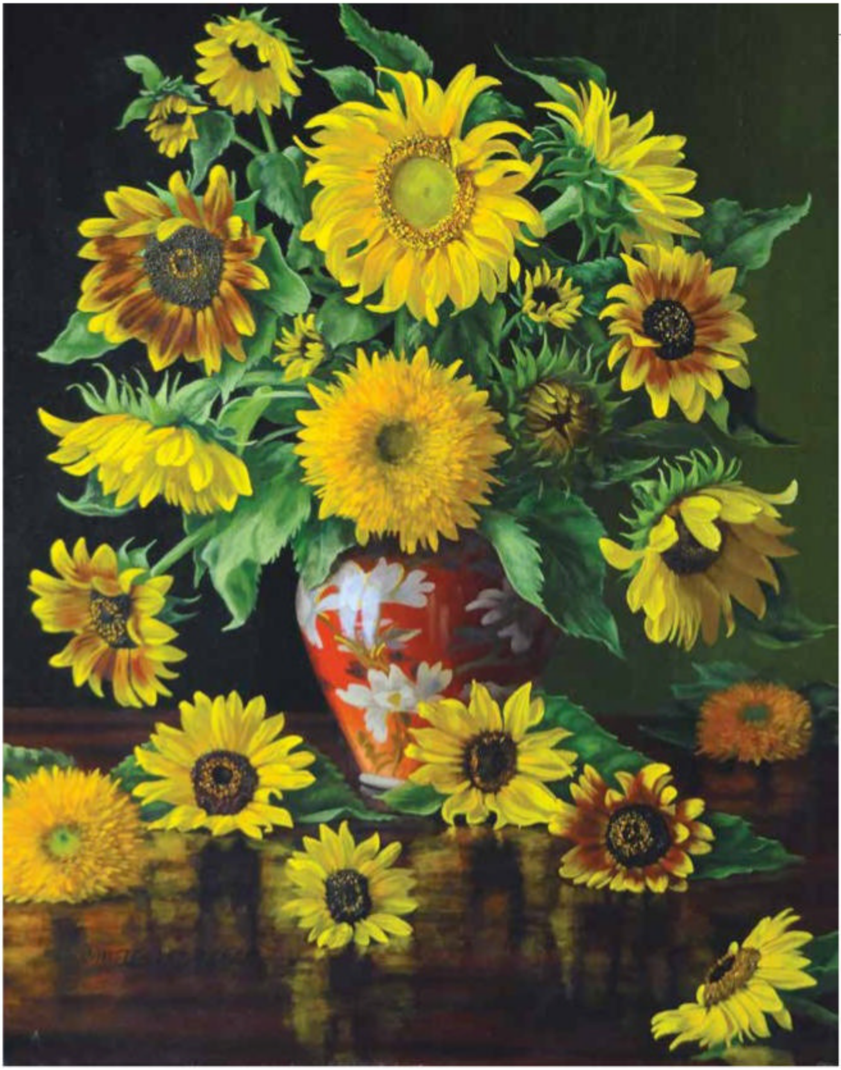

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1
Christopher Groves, *Your Tomorrow*, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 in.

2
H.M. Saffer II, *Harvest Patterns V*, oil on canvas, 32 x 32 in.

3
H.M. Saffer II, *Forest Magic III*, oil on canvas, 26 x 36 in.

4
Christopher Pierce, *Sunflowers in Crimson Vase*, oil, 30 x 24 in.

he paints, especially since he works from life. "It offers more information than any artist could possibly express on canvas and therefore we must choose which parts of it to reveal and interpret," he says.

An important aspect of Pierce's work is composition, as in the case of his still life piece *Chinese Lanterns with Fan*—based mostly on convex arcs created by the fan, pumpkins and more. *Sunflowers in Red Crimson* is another of Pierce's still lifes, with the scene showing sunflowers grown in the artist's garden, and blooms captured at almost all stages of life and from various angles. "There are several varieties of sunflowers in the painting which all have individual personalities, and the leaves are lush and voluptuous when they are freshly picked."

Saffer II, known for his interpretation of landscape pointillism with a Japanese influence, likes to imbue his paintings with emotion. About his show piece *Forest Magic III*, he shares, "the depth and silence of the forest inspired me to use those colors to convey those emotions. With *Harvest Patterns V*, the symmetry of the fields and the colors of the sky inspired me to create this work. My work is all about nature and the beauty that surrounds us each day. To be in harmony with oneself, one must be in harmony with nature."

To view 60-plus additional works inspired by or depicting nature, visit Lily Pad Gallery West in Milwaukee now through January 2, 2026. ●

Lily Pad Gallery West 215 N. Broadway • Milwaukee, WI 53202 • (414) 509-5756 • www.lilypadgallery.com

Life's Oddities

A retrospective at Phoenix Art Museum recontextualizes decades of work by figurative painter Eric Fischl. *By John O'Hern*

Eric Fischl: Stories Told, on view at the Phoenix Art Museum through June 14, 2026, is the first major survey of the artist's work in more than a decade, despite his position as one of the foremost American figurative painters of his generation.

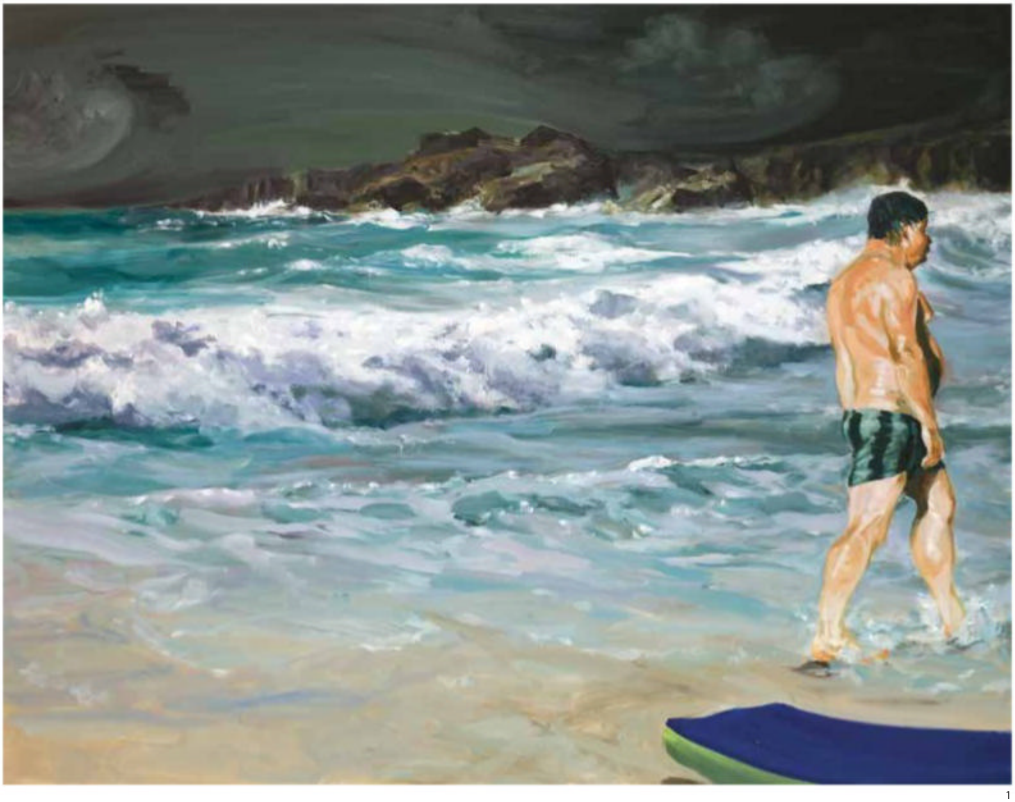
Guest curator Heather Sealy Lineberry has organized the exhibition in four sections devoted to Fischl's treatment of the human body singly, in a couple, as part of a family, or in a crowd. She says, "For more than 45 years, Eric Fischl has used figurative painting to examine the defining social issues and current events of our time. *Eric Fischl: Stories Told* is a timely opportunity to recontextualize the artist's work within our contemporary moment as figure painting experiences an international resurgence, and as Fischl continues to examine the possibilities and promises, the disparities and contradictions of the American experience."

Fischl's first solo exhibition was in 1975 when he showed his abstract paintings which received praise while his figurative work did not. Lineberry explains, "So, it may come as a surprise that a minimalist work by contempo-

1
Scenes from Late Paradise: Stupidity, 2007, oil on linen, 84 x 108 in. Hall Art Foundation. Image courtesy of the artist.
© 2025 Eric Fischl

2
Broken Hallelujah (Self Portrait), 2023, acrylic on linen. 68 x 96 in. Arora Collection, UK. Image courtesy of the artist.
© 2025 Eric Fischl

3
Island of the Cyclops: The Early Years, 2018, oil on linen. 80 x 98 in. Lenhardt Collection. Image courtesy of the artist.
© 2025 Eric Fischl



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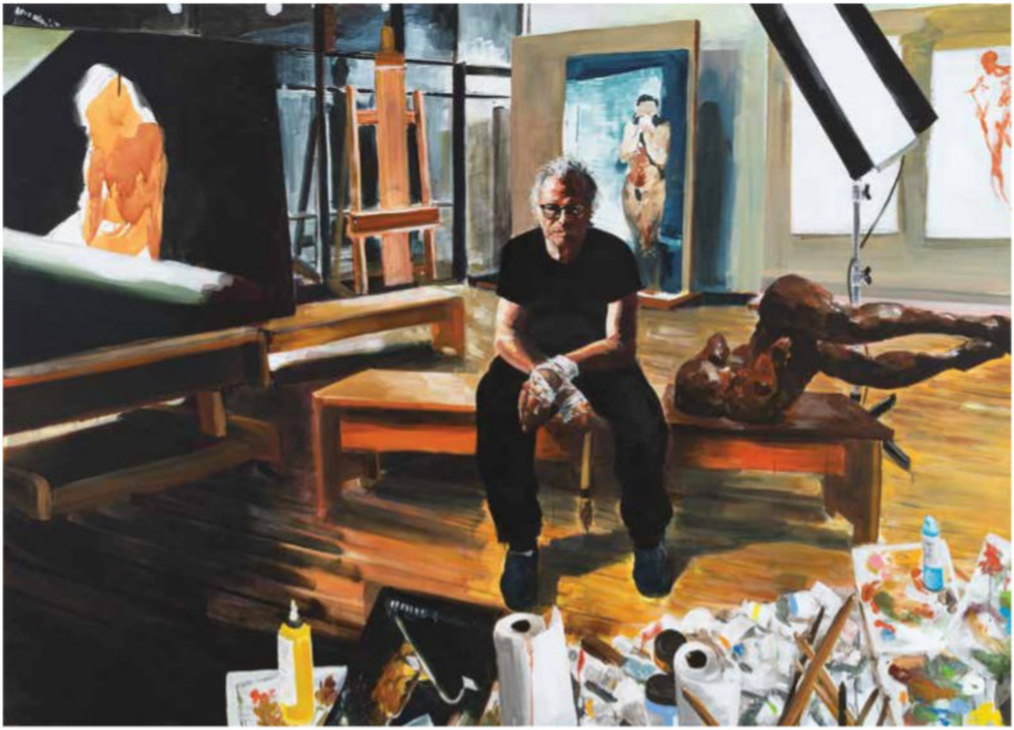

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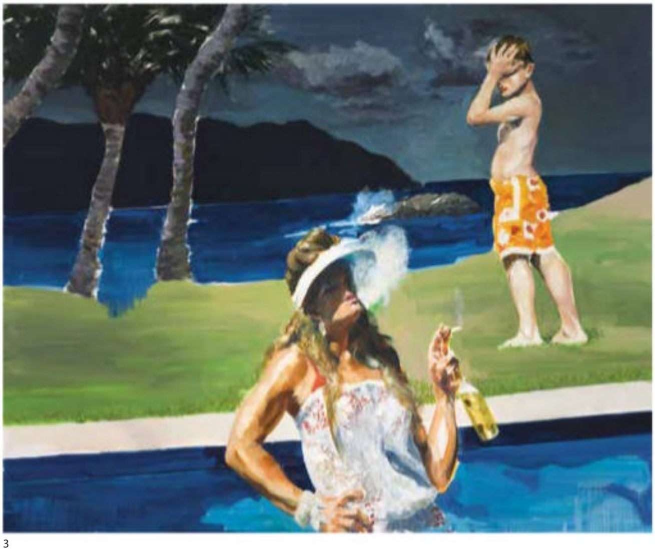

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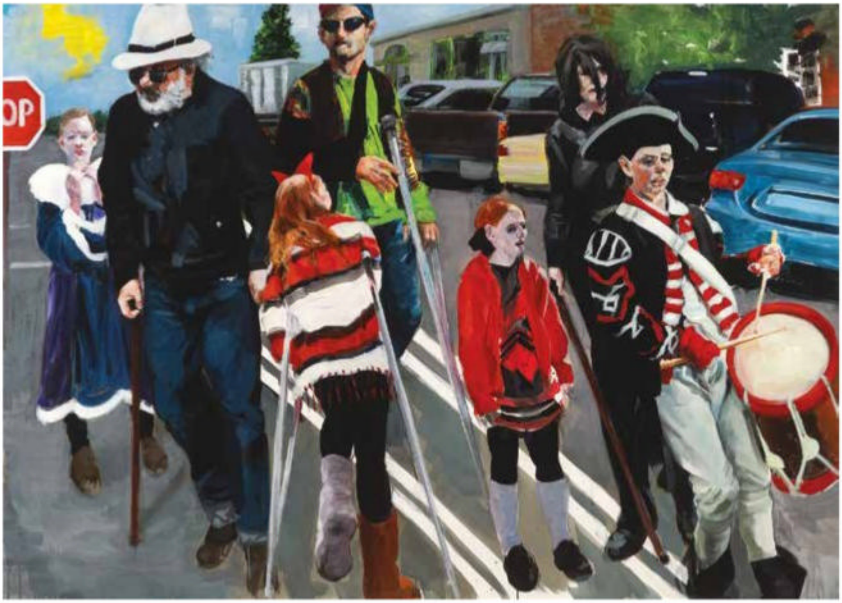
rary artist Elizabeth Murray was a key factor in Fischl's shift from abstraction to figuration. While teaching at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design—a hotbed of minimalism, conceptualism and new media—after leaving art school, Fischl often visited New York to see galleries and exhibitions. On a 1976 trip, he saw a show of Murray's new work including a deceptively simple composition of a circle pushing against the confines of a square. The metaphoric and formal subversion of allowing that circle to break from rigid geometries struck Fischl: '[Murray] had taken on a minimalist trope that was... very connected to a kind of elevated geometry of proportion and precision. She hand-painted it in a way that the circle didn't fit the square. It bulged...It was one of those unexpected revelations...suddenly, I see the way forward.'"

He turned to painting his life in the New York and Phoenix suburbs—idyllic locations that often didn't live up to their expectations. In her book essay, "After the Fall,"



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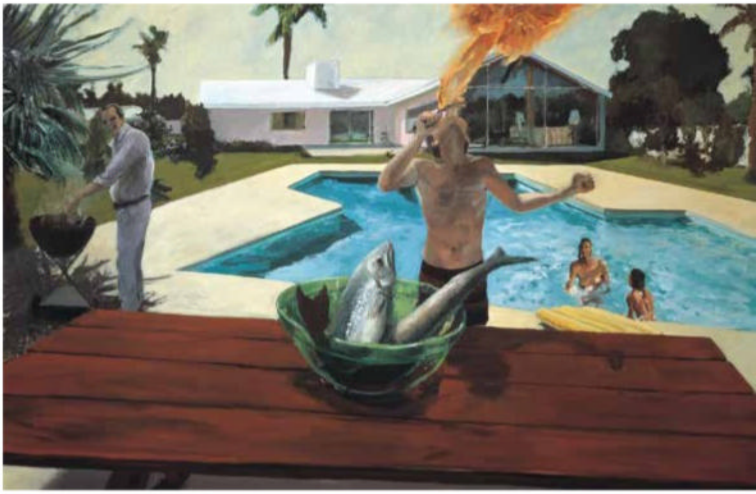
4
The Parade Returns, 2022, acrylic on linen. 68 x 96 in. Collection of Lise and Michael Evans. Image courtesy of the artist and Skarstedt Gallery, New York. © 2025 Eric Fischl

5
Barbeque, 1982, oil on canvas. 65 x 100 in. Steve Martin and Anne Stringfield. Image courtesy of the artist. © 2025 Eric Fischl

6
The Bed, The Chair, The Sitter, 1999, oil on linen. 78 x 93 in. Private Collection, New York. Image courtesy of the artist. © 2025 Eric Fischl



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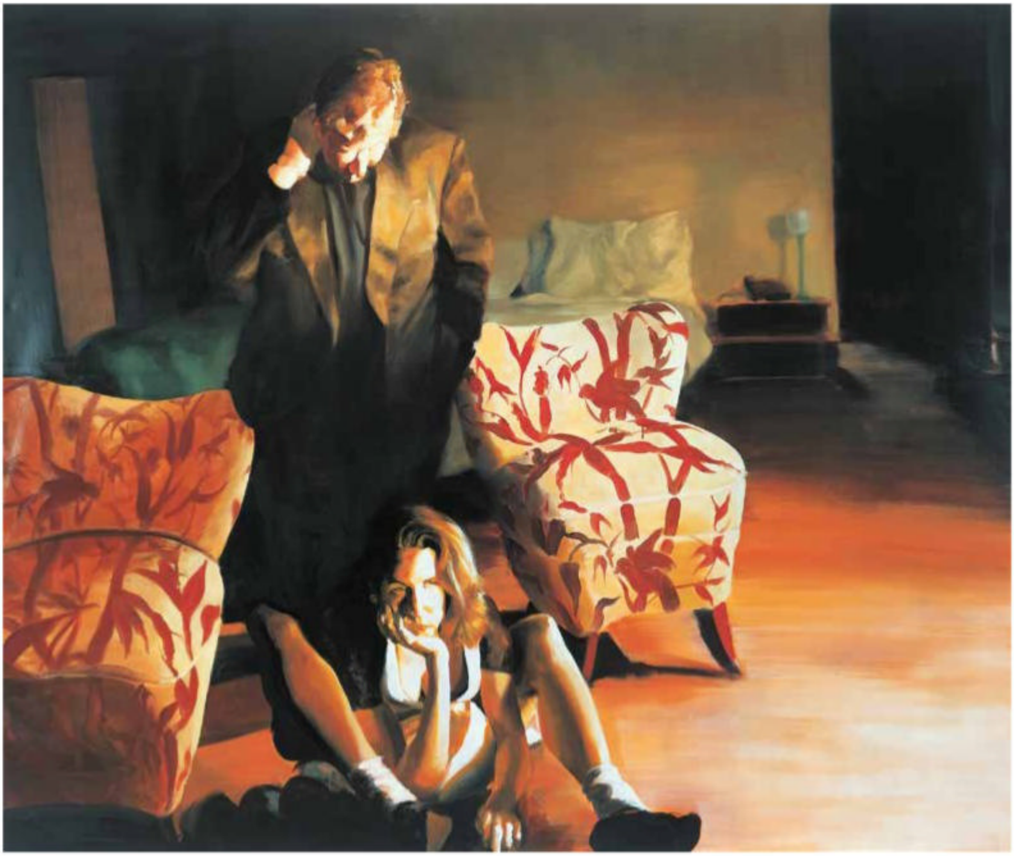
art critic and historian Eleanor Heartney observes, “These planned residential neighborhoods were to be the place where nature was tamed and domesticated and residents came together in a supportive community. But while all seemed well on the surface, the suburbs were also sites of racial and class exclusion, prefeminist suppression of women, and a stultifying social conformity that masked pathologies of depression, alcoholism, sexual frustration, and invisible violence. In his breakthrough paintings, Fischl explored a world informed by his own experiences as a child of the suburbs, living with an alcoholic mother whose disease was tearing his family apart.”

In paintings such as *Barbecue*, 1983, which Lineberry describes as an “off-kilter backyard family gathering,” a boy blows fire while his father tends to the grill and his family splashes in the pool. Fish out of water lie mysteriously in a glass bowl on the picnic table.

A parade in the idyllic Long Island community of Sag Harbor where Fischl lives with his wife, painter April Gornik, is decidedly weird. In *The Parade Returns*, 2022, a drummer boy in Revolutionary War costume thinks he is leading a motley crew down the main street. His unconforming paraders sport crutches and canes and an old man appears to have wandered obliviously through the procession. Fischl comments, “There are moments when the body becomes awkward and difficult and betrays your internal life. I’m interested in things that look like one thing and then become something else and flip back and forth.”

Contrary to the denigration of the past in midcentury art schools and among the



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critics of the time, Fischl studied the work of European modernists like Cézanne and Degas. Degas was a photographer and used the characteristics of photography in his paintings.

In a conversation with painter Arcmanoro Niles, Fischl commented, "Degas understood photography as a way of liberating painting by introducing whole new compositional possibilities. You couldn't get at it through the language or history of painting. Photographers accidentally click something, or a hand is in the frame, and because they're looking for a pure image, it is a mistake. Degas understood that you can have things entering and leaving the rectangle that are controlling compositional focus, but they're incidental. Instead of painting a portrait of a woman where she's at the center, the vase of flowers next to her was at the center. It was brilliant. And his sort of deep voyeuristic sense, especially with the dancers. He would create a scene in which you were seeing the whole moment, but you also were seeing through the crooked arm of this dancer to this other dancer who's tying her shoe. That becomes the real focus of the painting. Those kinds of inventions I find incredibly profound in terms of visual language."

Fischl continues to observe keenly and to explore the oddities of today's world in a series titled *Presence of an Absence*. He and Gornik have restored an old church in Sag Harbor to celebrate the continuing rich artistic life of Long Island. They explain, "The church strives to be a creative asset for our East End communities, sharing our facility and inviting the public to experience diverse events, from the expected to the unexpected, highlighting the work of writers and dancers as well as inventors and artists." ●

ERIC FISCHL: STORIES TOLD

Through June 14, 2026

Phoenix Art Museum, 1625 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85004, (602) 257-1880, www.phxart.org

Cultural References

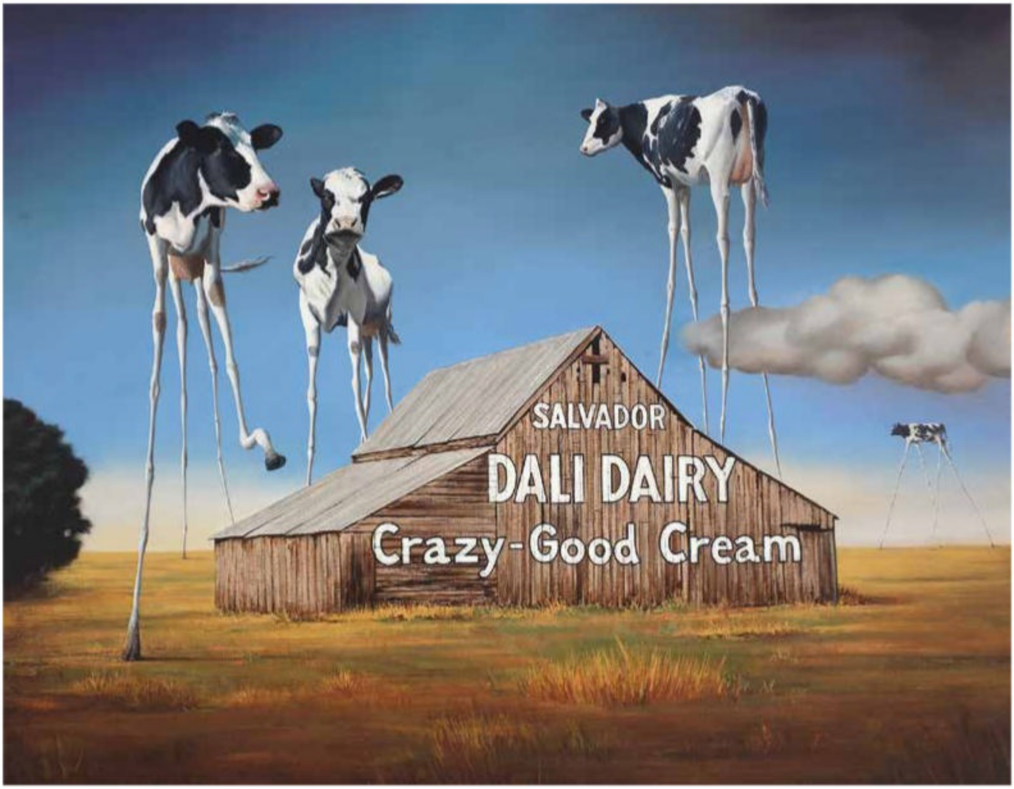
An exhibition currently on view at the James Museum explores the imaginative artwork of Ben Steele. *By Alyssa M. Tidwell*

For anyone who's dipped their toes into the world of art and art history, the paintings of contemporary realist Ben Steele will surely spark some "aha" moments. With wit and a playful imagination, Steele uses traditional techniques alongside contemporary sensibilities, creating an exciting conversation between the old and the new. Some paintings clearly reference famed Spanish artist Salvador Dalí, others Pop Art juggernaut Andy Warhol, Renaissance master Michelangelo, and Vermeer's iconic *The Girl with the Pearl Earring*.

Currently on view at the James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art is *Ben Steele: A POP of Art!*, an exhibition featuring 10 paintings on loan from the Tom and Mary James/Raymond James Financial Art Collection, who have been collecting Steele's work for two decades.

"Ben Steele's art combines familiar objects from pop culture and famous art history references like no other," says Emily Kapes, chief curator at the James Museum. "He has the technical talent to work in many styles *and* adds clever intention with puns and nostalgia. These paintings make a powerful impact with viewers because of the recognizable imagery they experience in a brand new way."

Kapes reflects on a few highlights in the exhibition, including *Double Take*, an oil and mixed media piece depicting John Wayne as an Etch A Sketch drawing. "In 1960, the Etch A Sketch debuted as a drawing toy with a 'magic screen.' That same year, actor John Wayne sat for this classic headshot photograph. Steele



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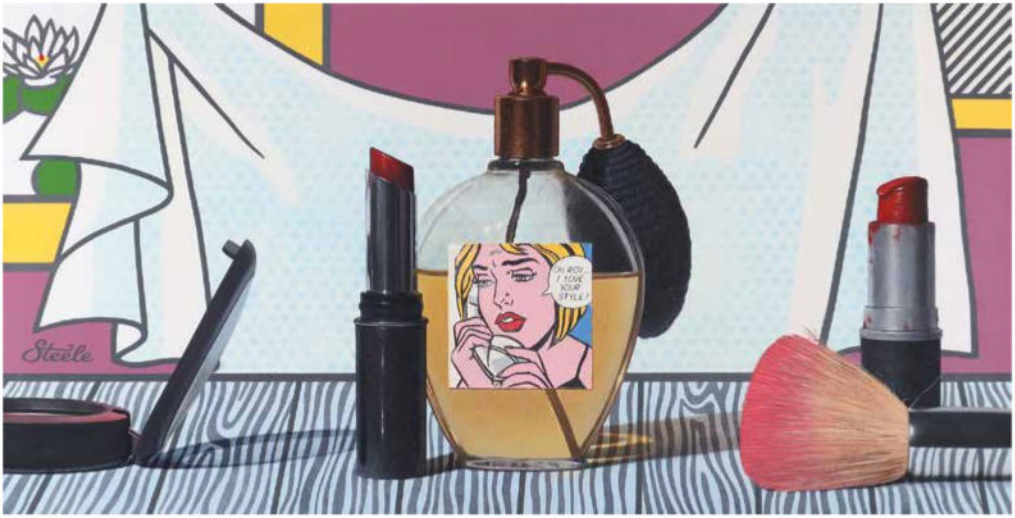

Steele
OH ROY... I LOVE YOUR STYLE!

2

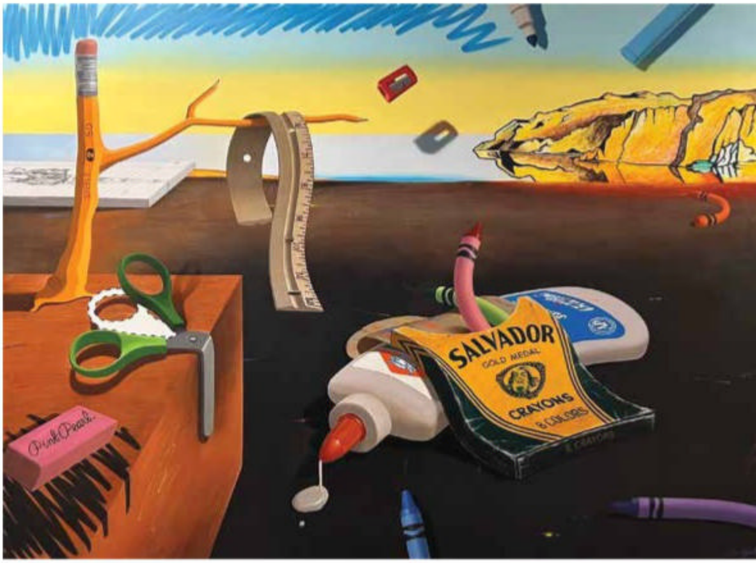
reimagines the portrait 'drawn' in the style of a classic Etch A Sketch," says Kapes.

Sketching with Sargeant is a trompe l'oeil depicting a haphazardly scribbled coloring book with crayons splayed across the paper. "You might not recognize this coloring book outline, but the crayon box reveals the original artist—American painter John Singer Sargeant. Steele's ode to Sargeant features an interpretation of his 1889 painting titled *An Out-of-Doors Study*. The crayons are so realistic, it seems like you could pick them right up," Kapes adds.

Steele's *Dali Dairy* is one of those paintings where the historical reference hits almost immediately. "This surreal farm scene is crazy good," says Kapes. "Steele's cows, with their long spindly legs, are a whimsical interpretation of Salvador Dalí's dreamlike elephants found in several of his paintings such as *The Temptation of St. Anthony* [from] 1946."

The exhibition includes works displayed at Raymond James' offices in St. Petersburg that are not often seen by the public. The special installation will be presented in the hall next to the Earth and Humanity Foundation Wildlife Gallery.

"These paintings show that Ben Steele is as clever as he is talented," says Kapes. "The art gives audiences the chance to play along and ask, 'What famous references do you recognize?'"



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BEN STEELE: A POP OF ART!

On view now

James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art
150 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg, FL 33701
(727) 892-4200, thejamesmuseum.org

1
Dali Dairy, 2009, oil on canvas, 40 x 50 in.

2
Oh Roy…I Love Your Style, 2021, 25 x 50 in.

3
Salvador's School, 2011, oil on canvas, 58 x 78 in.

international artist
AWARD WINNER

ZOLTÁN BOROS
Pest, Hungary • borosartwork@gmail.com • www.borosart.hu

Powerful Contrasts

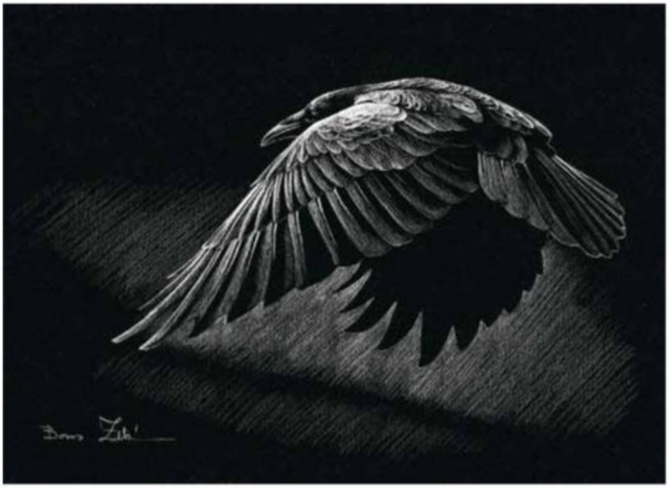
Boros was the Grand Prize Winner in International Artist magazine's Challenge No. 148 Wildlife.

Zoltán Boros was born in 1976 in Subotica, a city once located in the southern region of Hungary, but now a part of Serbia. Now living in Pest, Hungary, Boros has been interested in wildlife and hunting-themed artworks since childhood.

His artwork is primarily based on native wildlife species, and as a hunter himself, Boros can directly observe the behavior of the subjects he captures in their natural habitat. A self-taught artist, Boros has received international recognition for his wildlife art, with artwork appearing in exhibitions around the globe, including the Weatherby Auction in Reno, Nevada, Holt's Auction in London, and exhibitions in Spain, Germany, Austria, Canada, the Netherlands, and his native Hungary.

The artist works with both pencils and oil paints and is captivated by the rich world of lines and monochromatic tones in graphic art. "The shapes that emerge from the unique set of curves and straight lines, interspersed with soft dynamics, are still my favorite. It is no coincidence that many famous artists consider this technique to be the basis of all techniques. I love the simplicity, the broken structure, the 'naked truth' of graphics," he says. "The basis for everything must be rock steady drawing skills. Here, the viewers' eyes should not be distracted by bright colors and an almost kitschy cavalcade of colors. You have to have a good knowledge of anatomy, and of course, being able to draw is no disadvantage. Even today, I always draw as a form of relaxation."

Commenting on his use of oils, he says, "Those who try to paint with oil choose a difficult job. It looks simple but to turn colors into shapes masses takes real magic. The brushstrokes must form the shapes and the curve of their surface. I am not a fan of photorealistic representation. That's what photography is for. I practice the realistic branch of painting, but I put a lot of emphasis on creating a personal illusion in my paintings. I trigger the viewer's imagination, but I leave it up to them to decide what the final image will look like. I leave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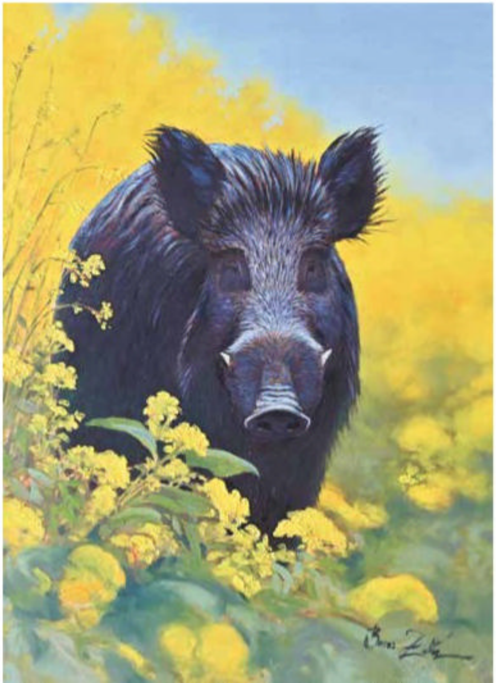
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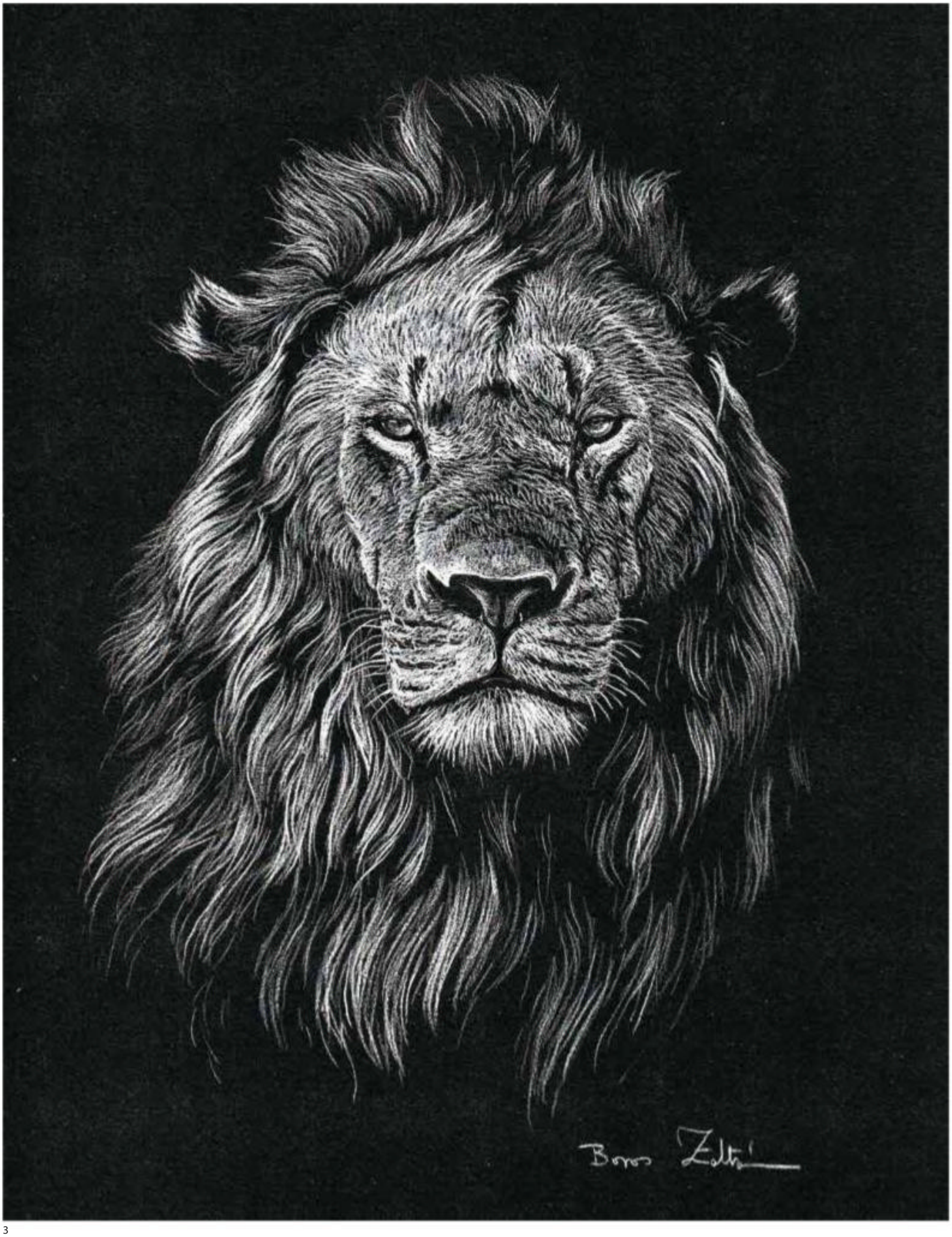
1
Raven, white pencil drawing, 8 x 12 in.

2
Wild boar in rapeseed field, oil, 15¾ x 12 in.

3
The lion's gaze, white pencil drawing, 12 x 8 in.



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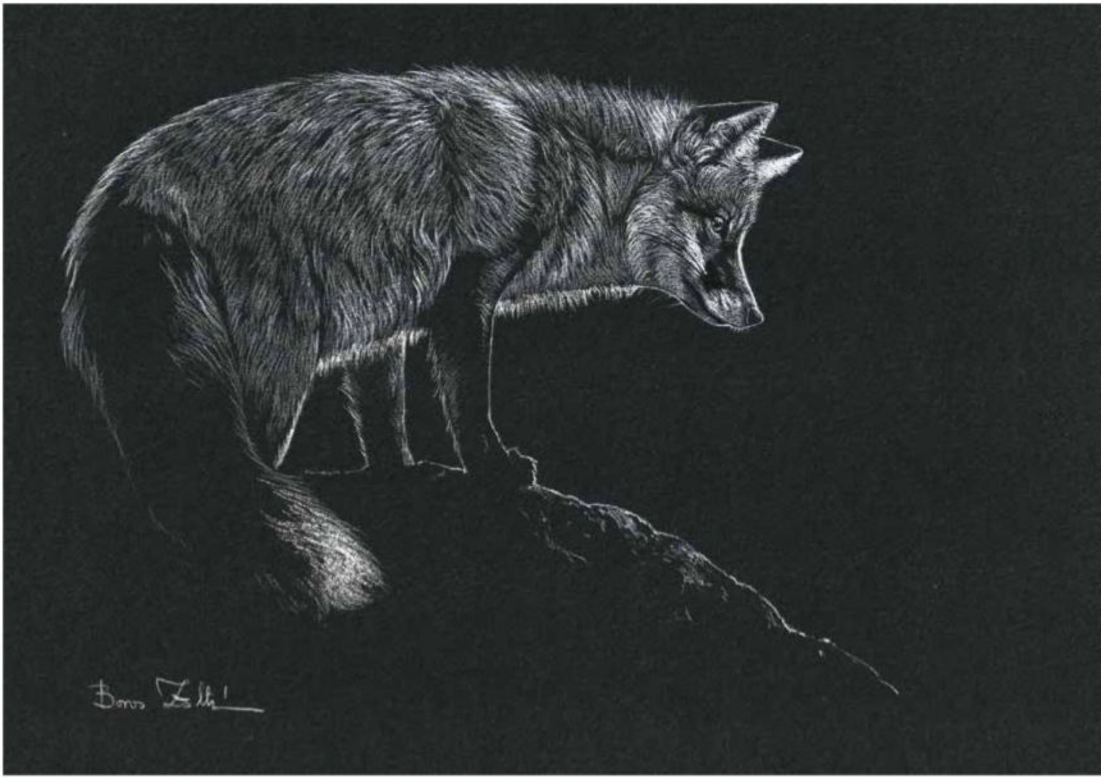
AWARD WINNER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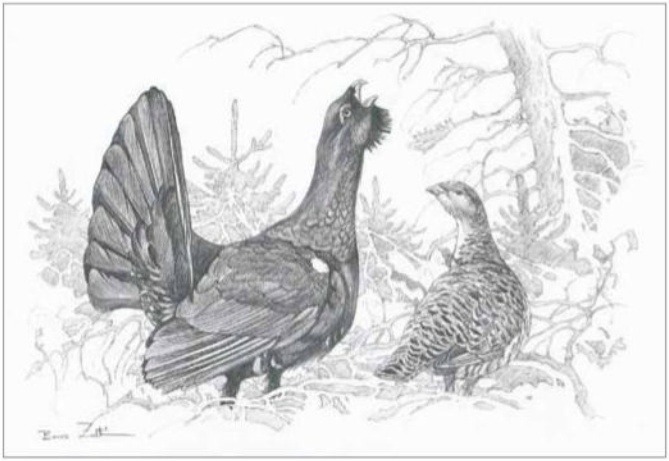
space and opportunity for the viewers to fill the picture with their own imagination."

One of Boros' recent works, *The lion's gaze*, is a powerful portrait of a lion looking directly at the viewer. The drawing was done with white pencils on black paper. "I have visited several countries in Africa to study wild animals in their natural habitat. Wherever I have been on this continent, the gaze of a lion has always captivated me. There is something very terrifying [about them]. It is as if I am looking into the past, into the ancient times. I wanted to convey this feeling in this drawing."

Another recent white pencil drawing by Boros is *Fox on hill*. "The fox is a short animal, so it is usually depicted from above, because that is how it is seen," says the artist. "I thought I would try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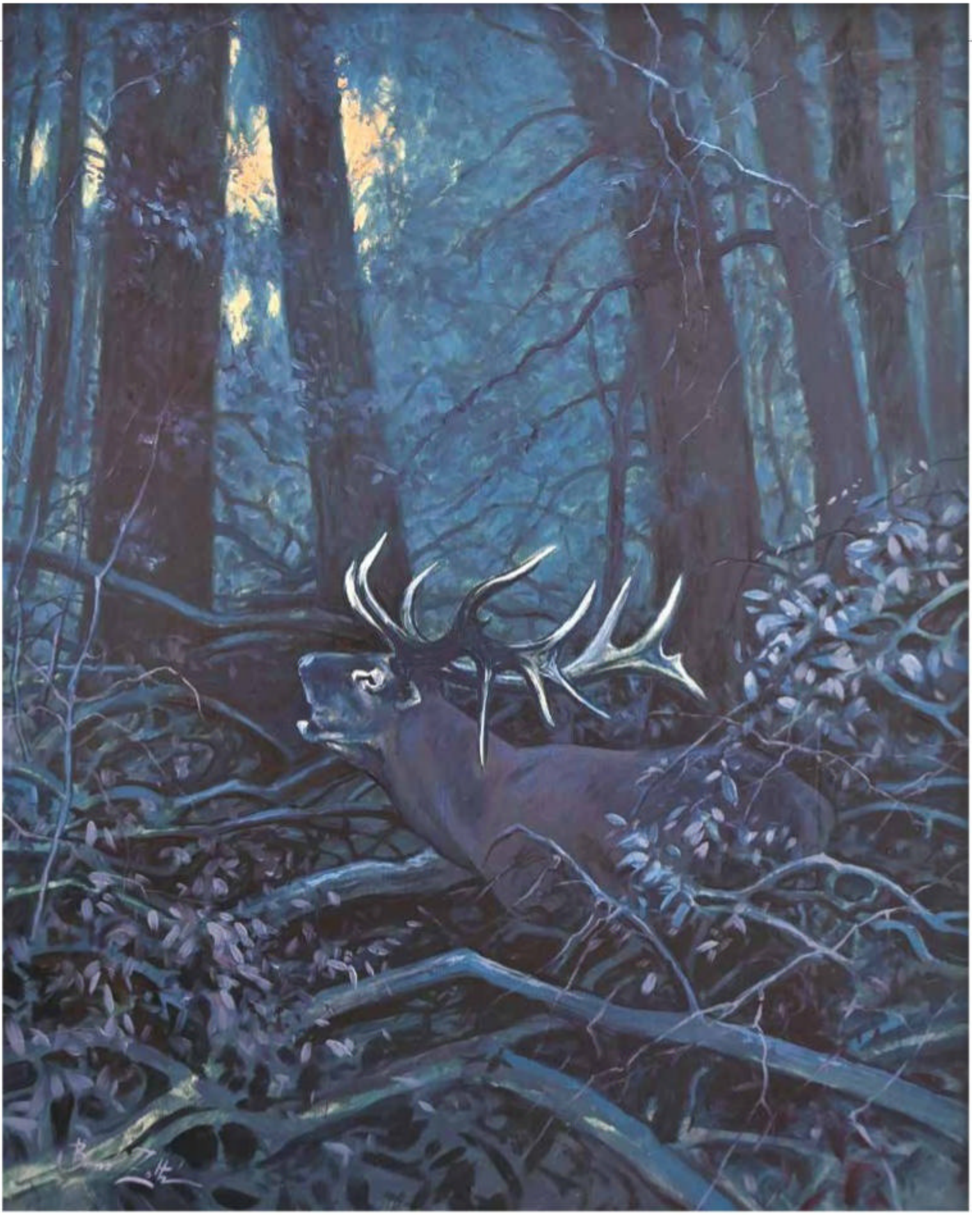

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to change the perspective and show him from a different angle. It was important to faithfully reproduce the soft texture of his fur, so I used fine lines and meticulous detailing. I depicted the hill with just a small, almost insignificant line, drawing a few details on it. I also created his tail in this way, placing the main emphasis on the white end of his tail."

Boros has received numerous awards for his wildlife art and is currently a member of the Society of Animal Artists. ●

4
Fox on hill, white pencil drawing, 8 x 12 in.

5
Capercaillie rumble, pencil drawing, 8 x 12 in.

6
Awakening, oil, 19½ x 15¾ in.

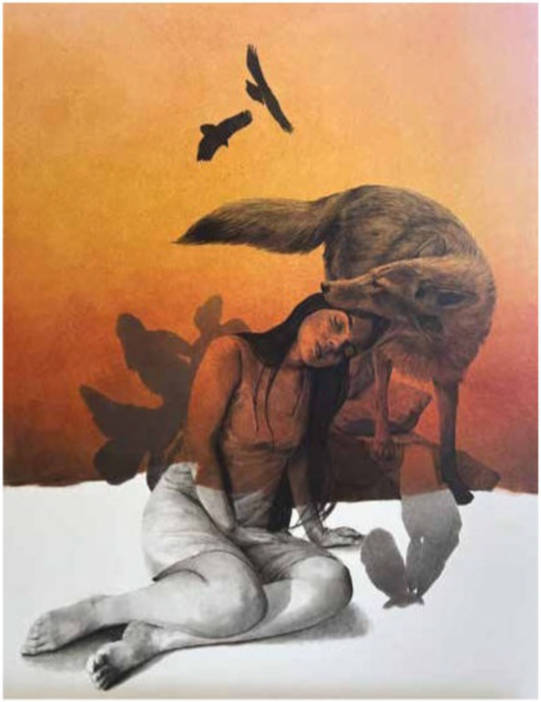
international artist AWARD WINNER

AMANDA KAZEMI

San Diego, CA • amandakazemi@gmail.com • www.amandakazemi.com

Rebalancing Act

Kazemi was the Second Prize Winner in International Artist magazine's Challenge No. 147 People & Figures.



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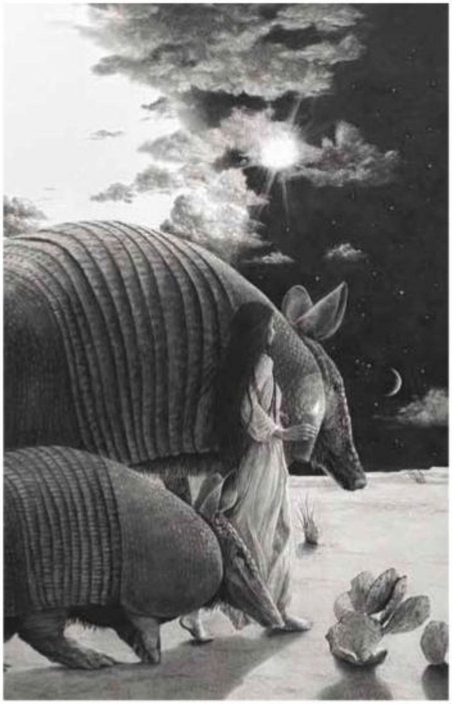

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In elementary school, artist Amanda Kazemi would sit on the playground, watching the gray skies as they parted to reveal fleeting rays of light. "These overcast days symbolize life's ebb and flow and inspire my black-and-white charcoal drawings," she says. Through anthropomorphic animals, plants and people, Kazemi's artwork explores themes from classic literature and fables, reflecting her Mexican-Iranian identity. "My art tells the story of my ongoing journey, shaped by community, solitude and curiosity," says the artist.

In one of Kazemi's recent pieces, titled *Precarious*, a woman sits on the ground resting her head inside the mouth of a coyote. "Sometimes I walk around in public and focus on the precariousities I encounter. There's this rebalancing act constantly happening right before our eyes between life and death," she says. "For example, we have our routines and continue to perform our routines with some deviations until one day we don't. Not in a grim way, but in an interesting push and pull way, where we reverberate like plucked guitar strings around each other and make a rhythmic hum."

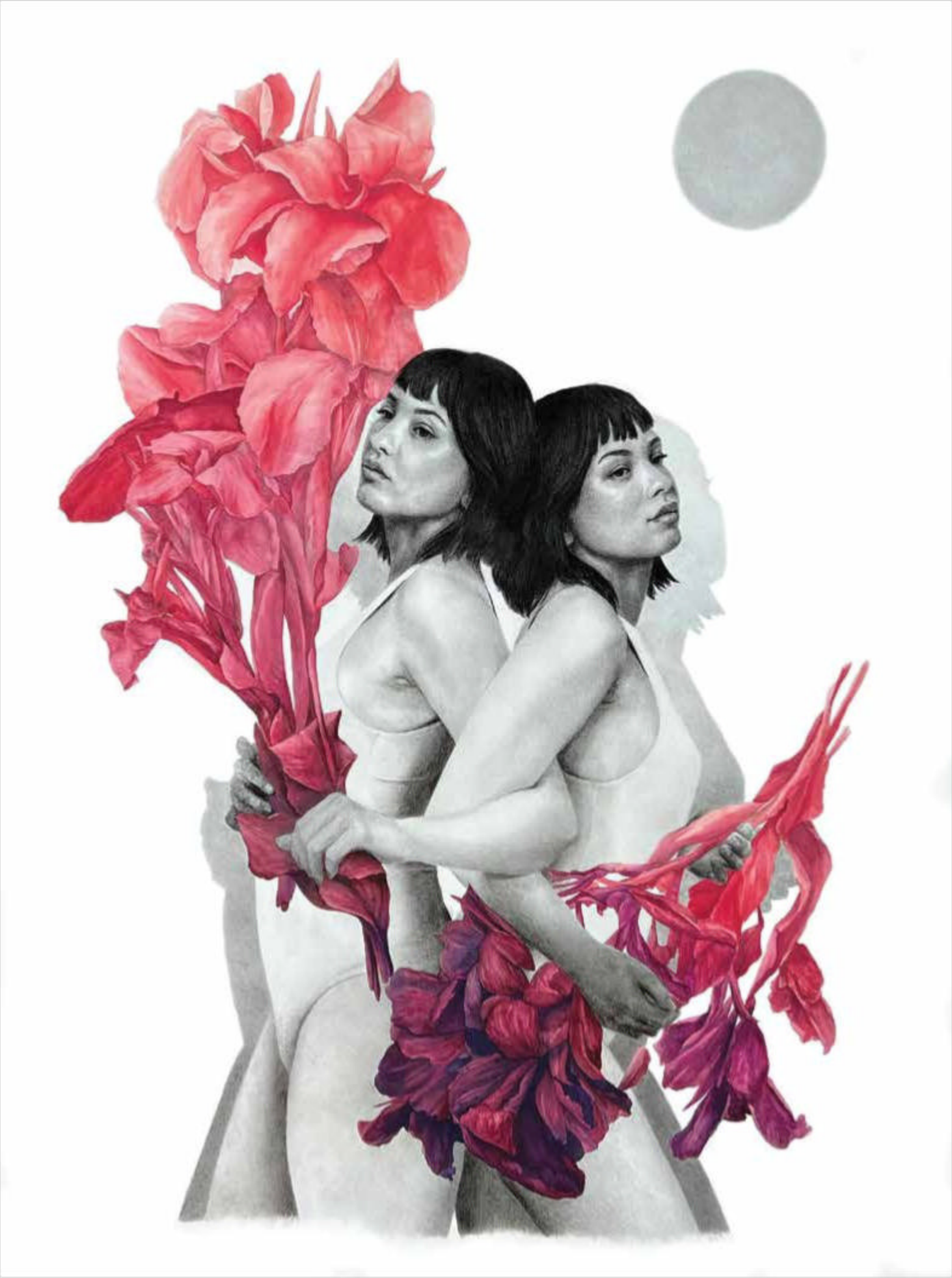
Another charcoal, *Into the Shadow*, depicts a woman walking through the desert at night, flanked by two giant armadillos. "It wasn't until I reached 32 years old that I chose to be curious about the things that had been life-long pain points within myself. It can feel easier to ignore or push down emotions rather than facing them. In *Into the Shadow*, I try to harness my inner light, with the addition of the armadillo to represent ancestral power and beyond," Kazemi says.

The artist currently lives in Southern California. To see more of her work, visit www.amandakazemi.com. ●

1
Precarious, graphite, charcoal and soft pastel, 30 x 20 in.

2
Into the Shadow, charcoal and graphite, 30 x 20 in.

3
Vanitas, charcoal, graphite and gouache, 32 x 24 in.



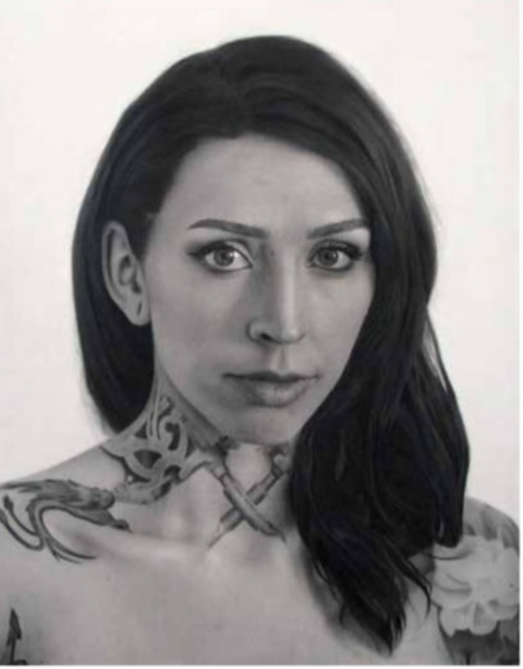
3

international artist
AWARD WINNER

JESSIE BABIN
New Brunswick, Canada • contact@jessiebabin.com • www.jessiebabin.com

Exploratory Space

Babin was the Third Prize Winner in International Artist magazine's Challenge No. 147 People & Figures.



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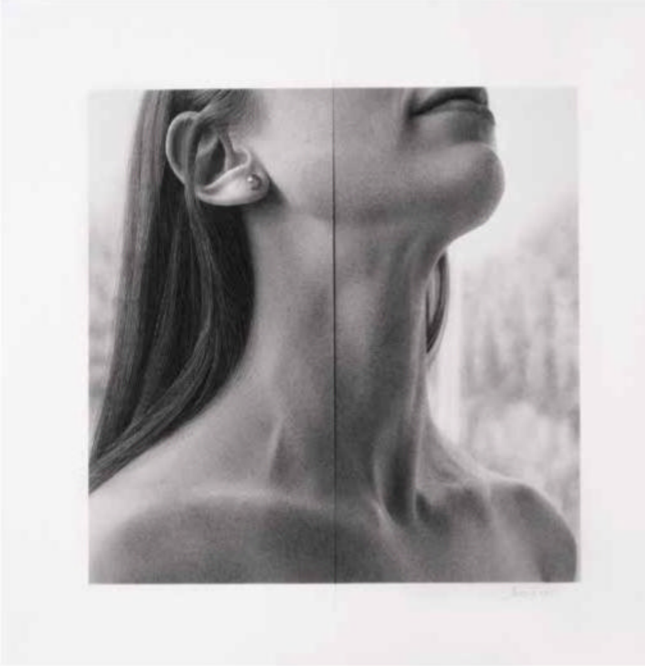

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Canadian artist Jessie Babin has loved drawing since a very young age, eventually going on to study at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, where she earned a BFA in fine art. She began her career as a full-time artist in 2013 and has exhibited her work in both group shows and solo exhibitions across Canada.

Most of Babin's works are created using graphite or colored pencil on paper. "Portraits and figures have always been my favorite subjects," she says. One of her most recent works, *Tension I*, depicts the muscles in a woman's neck as she tilts her head backward. There is a distinct cut running down the center of the drawing. "I wanted to incorporate the element of risk in this piece by planning to cut directly into the paper after completing the drawing portion," says Babin. "The incision would either ruin the drawing entirely or make the composition more interesting. Interestingly enough, when the drawing is viewed from one angle, the incision lifts a side of the paper and pushes back the other, adding a sculptural element to the drawing. From the opposite angle, the cut is almost invisible."

In recent years, the artist has begun experimenting with various technologies and integrating them into her creative process. "I've explored the fusion of realism with more abstract elements and introduced elements of risk into my practice, such as physically cutting into my drawings," she explains. "In many ways, my work serves as a space for exploration—a way for me to process ideas and engage with the things that interest me." ●

1
Kit King I, graphite and pencil on paper, 22 x 30 in.

2
Tension I, graphite and pencil on paper, 12 x 12 in.

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The Full Spectrum

Spectrum Miami and Red Dot Miami take over Mana Wynwood Convention Center during Miami Art Week. *By Sarah Gianelli*

There are a dizzying number of art shows and events during *Miami Art Week*, but two not to miss are *Spectrum Miami* and *Red Dot Miami*. Conveniently located under one roof at the sprawling Mana Wynwood Convention Center, and both accessible with a single ticket, the shows are an opportunity to experience more than 150,000 square feet of contemporary art by emerging and established artists from around the world.

This year, across both shows, around 300 exhibitors will return to showcase the work of more than 1,000 artists. The sister fairs, while complementary, also have their own distinct identities. *Spectrum Miami*, now in its 15th year, has an upscale, urban feel, and provides a platform for independent career artists, studios, and younger galleries that are taking exciting and innovative approaches to contemporary art. Special exhibitions and programming are curated to highlight their talent and Miami's thriving art scene.

Returning to 2025 *Spectrum Miami* is [SOLO], a section within the broader show that offers artists the opportunity to present their work on an international stage.

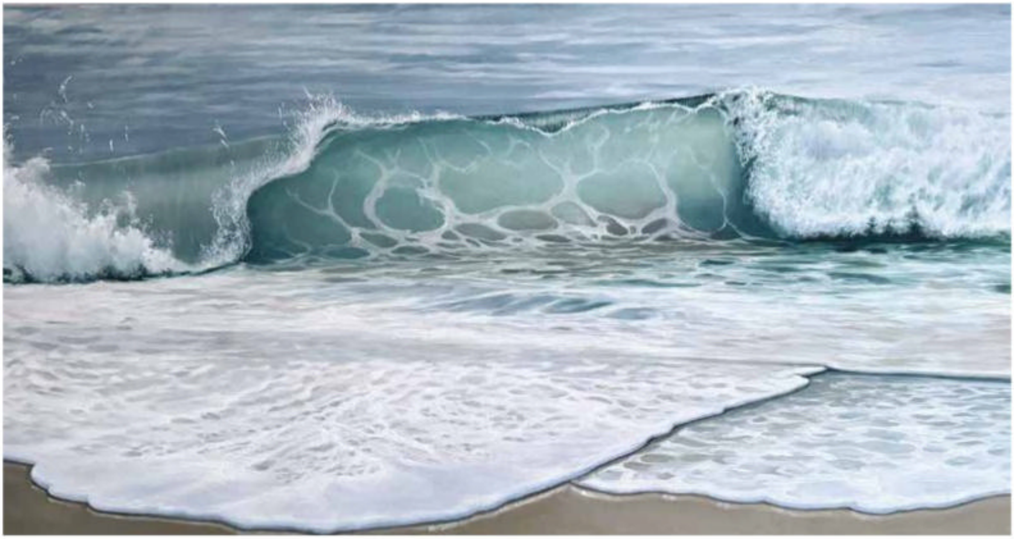
"[SOLO] has become the ultimate venue for independent artists to be discovered—not only by gallery owners and art publishers, but also by collectors and enthusiasts," says Eric Smith, president of

1
Spectrum Miami & *Red Dot Miami* take place under one roof at the Maya Winwood Convention Center during *Miami Art Week*. Courtesy Redwood Art Group.

2
Lisa Cuscuna, *Thunder*, oil on canvas, 36 x 72 in. Courtesy Contemporary Art Gallery USA.

3
Banksy, *Jace and Jill*, 2005, screen print, 21 x 29 in. End to End Gallery, Aventura, FL.

SPECTRUM miami
RED DOT MIAMI
HAVE TICKETS
HAVE TICKETS
BUY TICKETS
U-HAUL



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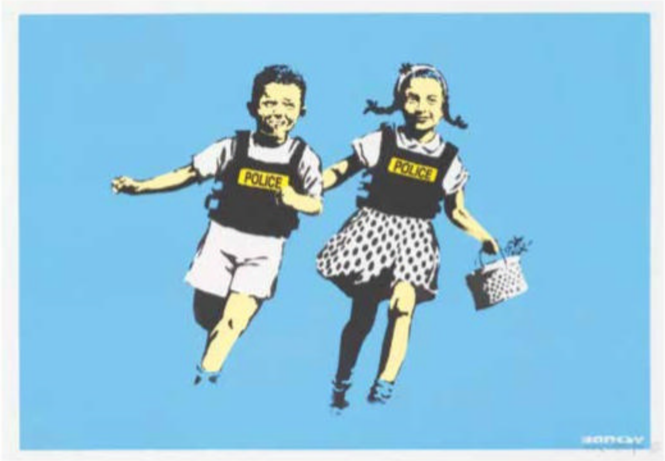

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Redwood Art Group, the show's producer. "[SOLO] enables emerging artists who are independent to have their own platform, to exhibit their work without being part of a collective of artists under a gallery umbrella. These independent artists return each year, as their reputation and popularity continues to grow with the show, and as they build their own clientele of collectors and network of followers. Many original [SOLO] artists become exhibitors at *Red Dot Miami* after being discovered by a leading gallery. [SOLO] is viewed as a first step and launchpad for an artist's career."

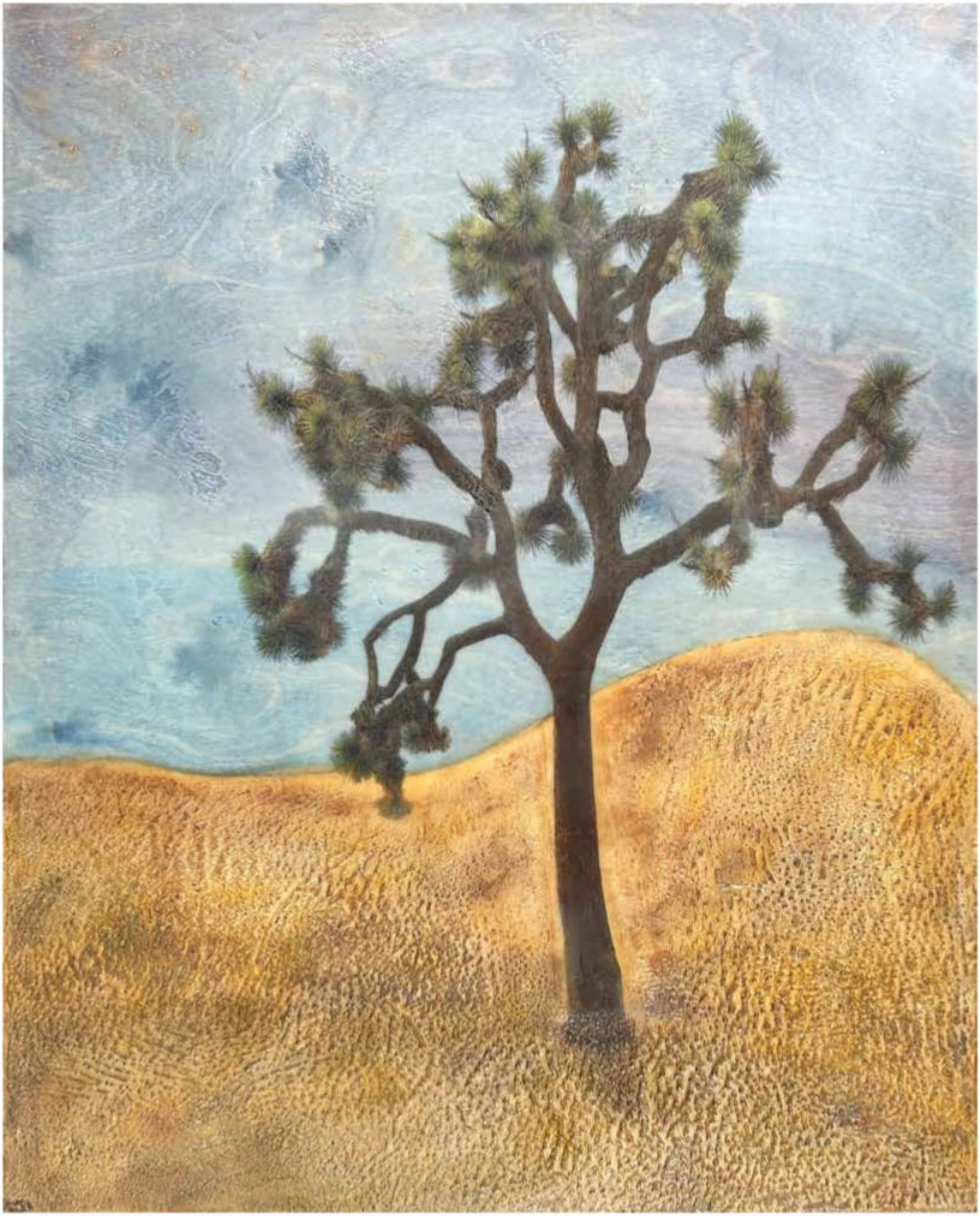
After a successful debut last year, the Spectrum Art Theater, where show-goers can watch live art demonstrations by some of today's most innovative artists throughout the weekend, will once again be a part of the December event.

The adjacently located *Red Dot Miami*, now in its 20th year, is a curated, gallery-only contemporary art fair where 70 leading national and international galleries representing over 500 artists, showcase contemporary works by their top-tier artists. Additional programming includes exhibitions and insight from art industry professionals, art nonprofits and institutions.

Both shows will feature their annual special programs: Art Labs, Spotlight Program, and the popular Discoveries Collection, which showcases artwork chosen by the *Spectrum Miami*, with special pricing.

An exciting new addition is a VIP Lounge. "Due to popular demand and in-line with our elevated experience each year, this will be a highly anticipated outdoor area with lounge seating and VIP bar that will cater to premium ticket holders, invited VIP guests, Redwood Art Group partners and business leaders who are at the forefront of the industry," says Smith. "We anticipate our new VIP Lounge to be very popular due to its exclusivity and privacy for the art world's elite."

The Opening Night Preview for *Spectrum Miami* and *Red Dot Miami* will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3, where attendees can enjoy drinks and musical entertainment. The fair opens to the public on December 4 and runs through Sunday, December 7.



4

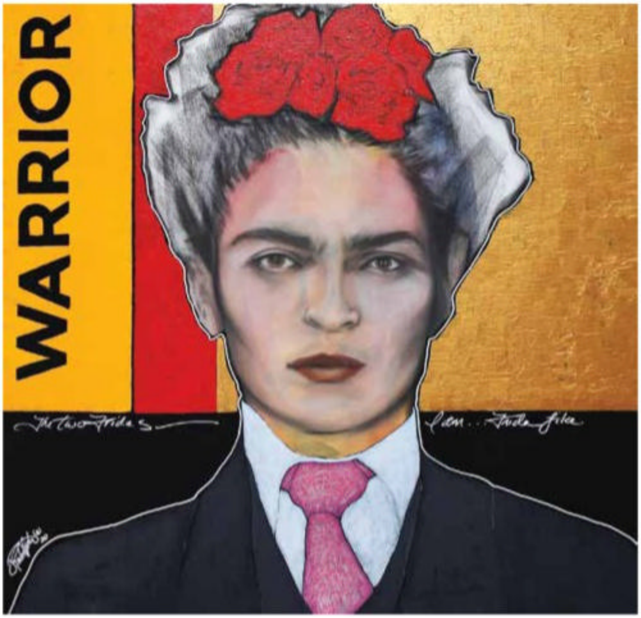
AGI FINE ART

5

4
MCP2 Studio, *Joshua Tree Forest #2*, 2025, encaustic, tissue paper, pastel, watercolor on birchwood panel, 24 x 30 in. Courtesy MCP2 Studio.

5
An interior view of *Spectrum Miami*.

6
Jacqueline Rudolph, *Frida Like*, mixed media on canvas, 36 x 36 in.



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For ticketing information and show hours, visit www.redwoodartgroup.com

"People flock to Miami in December to see the fairs and conduct business, but to also have a good time," says Smith. "Every art fair has the underlying goal to prosper and conduct sales for its exhibitors...This world-renowned week in December remains as popular as ever for the art world, but because it's Miami, it will always be advantageous for fairs to add an extra layer of appeal for the audience, who like to relax in the Magic City after conducting business...Our exhibitors and collectors return to the fairs each year because of the connection they have on a social level 'after-hours,' so we ensure they are fully entertained with additional cultural attractions as part of our programming, such as fashion and music. The feedback has been excellent and they seem to want more." ●

SPECTRUM MIAMI & RED DOT MIAMI

December 3-7, 2025
Mana Wynwood Convention Center
318 NW 23rd Street, Miami, FL 33127
www.redwoodartgroup.com

A Dazzling Display

LA Art Show returns to Los Angeles in January with an abundance of contemporary art from around the world. *By Sarah Gianelli*

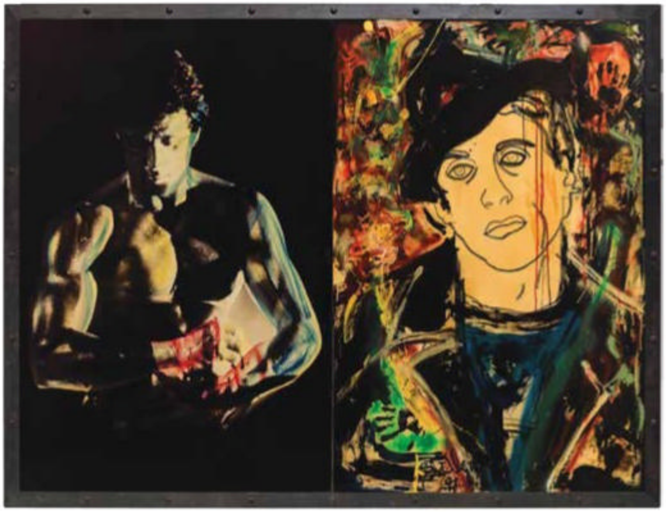
Of the many contemporary art fairs that pop up in the nation's biggest metropolises, the *LA Art Show* is one of the most anticipated of the year—and for good reason. I have had the opportunity to attend twice, and the energy and passion for art is palpable. The artwork is plentiful and top notch. After a respectfully subdued event on the heels of the devasting wild fires last year, the 2026 show, taking place January 7 through 11, will no doubt return with unmatched vitality.

"Although it was an unimaginable time for the city, we are thankful that so many people came out for last year's remarkable 30th anniversary edition, during which we got to support the artistic community while also paying homage to the resilience of Los Angeles," says show producer and director Kassandra Voyagis. "We are thrilled to once again unite galleries, artists and enthusiasts from across the globe to participate in and celebrate the city's rich cultural legacy."

More than 100 exhibitors from around the world will fill the Los Angeles Convention Center for three days with a diverse variety of art, curated exhibitions and installations, artist talks and demos; and entertainment. Don't miss the opening night VIP party for an array of complimentary tapas from local food vendors, drinks, music and a chance to get a sneak peek at the art before the show opens to the public the following day.

A few of the 2026 highlights include the Latin American Pavilion, which Marisa Caichiolo oversees (she also curates the show's educational platform, DIVERSEartLA), which will showcase emerging artists from other regions of the American continent.

Some exciting new additions to this year's show is Palm Beach gallery Provident Fine Art, which will be featuring abstract paintings by movie star Sylvester Stallone; the first exhibitor from Ireland, Dublin-based Oliver Sears Gallery, along with several new U.K. exhibitors including John Martin Gallery out of London, Quantum



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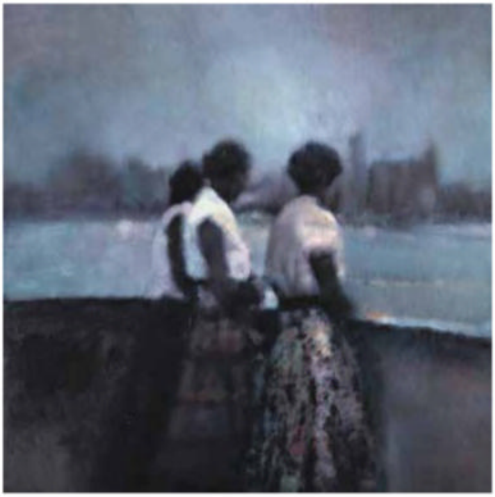

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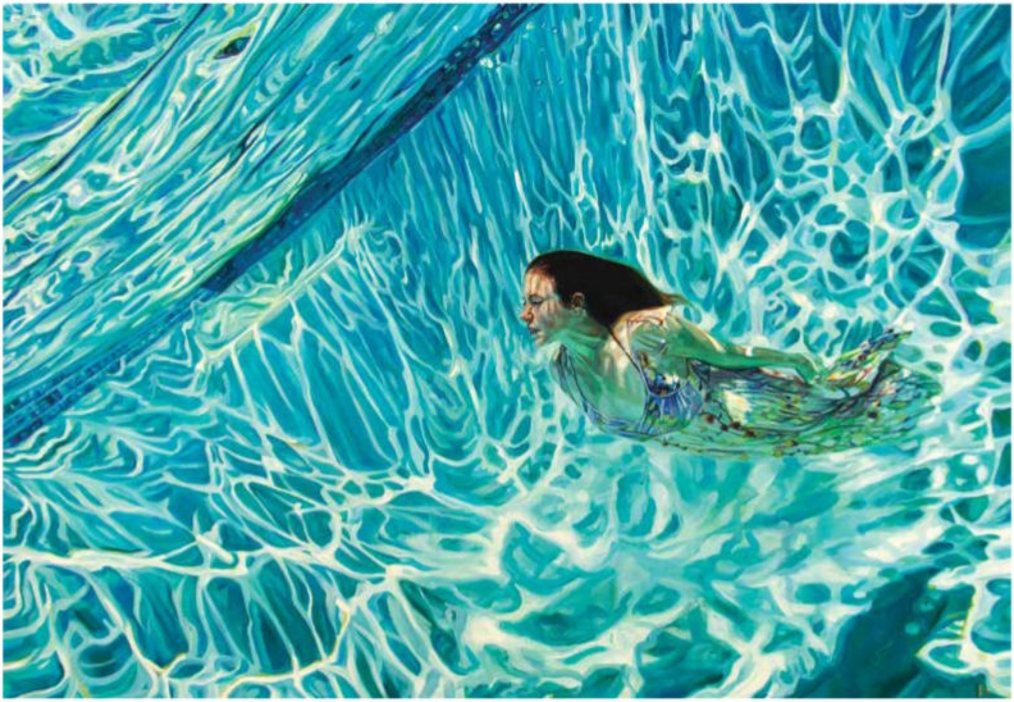
1
Sylvester Stallone, *Male Pattern Badness*, 1991, oil on canvas, 72 x 96 in. Courtesy Provident Fine Art, Palm Beach, FL.

2
Anne Magill, *The Three*, oil on canvas, 39 x 39 in. Courtesy John Martin Gallery, London.

3
Heather Horton, *Muscles Better and Nerves More*, oil on canvas, 23 x 33 in. Courtesy Ponton Gallery, London.

4
Featuring a diverse array of contemporary art, the *LA Art Show* returns to the Los Angeles Convention Center.



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Contemporary Art and Pontone Gallery

LA Art Show 2026 continues its annual collaborations with esteemed galleries that include Arcadia Contemporary out of New York City; and Rehs Galleries, another New York-based exhibitor specializing in historic and contemporary art that has participated in the *LA Art Show* since its inception in 1994. Other partnering galleries include Los Angeles' Fabrik Projects, U.K.-based Rebecca Hossack Art Gallery, Coral Contemporary Gallery from Miami, and Paris gallery K+Y Contemporary Art.

Voyagis adds, "As one of the few remaining privately owned and operated art fairs of such scale, the *LA Art Show* adds a layer of authenticity to the city's artistic landscape, embodying the vibrant and multicultural spirit of our host community…In contrast to more exclusive fairs, we ensure a more accessible and diverse selection of art, catering to a wide audience from experienced collectors to emerging art aficionados, all at varying price points."

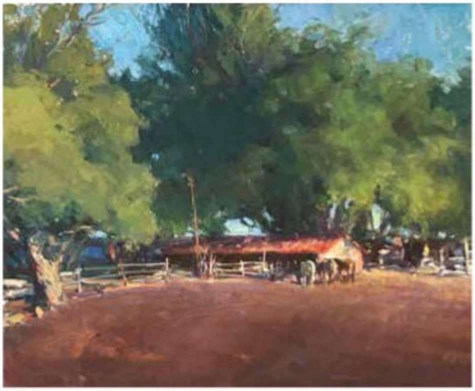
LA Art Show will be followed by its East Coast counterpart, *Art Palm Beach* from January 28 to February 1 in Florida at Palm Beach County Convention Center. ●

4

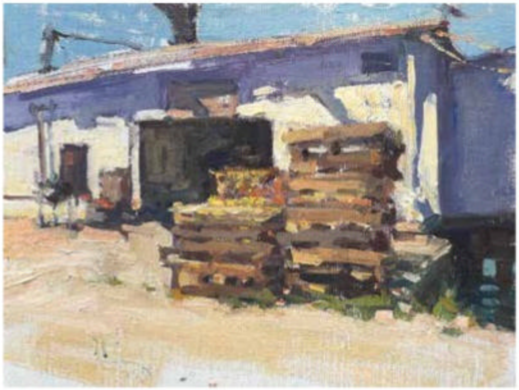
LA ART SHOW

January 7-11, 2026

Los Angeles Convention Center
1201 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90015
www.laartshow.com

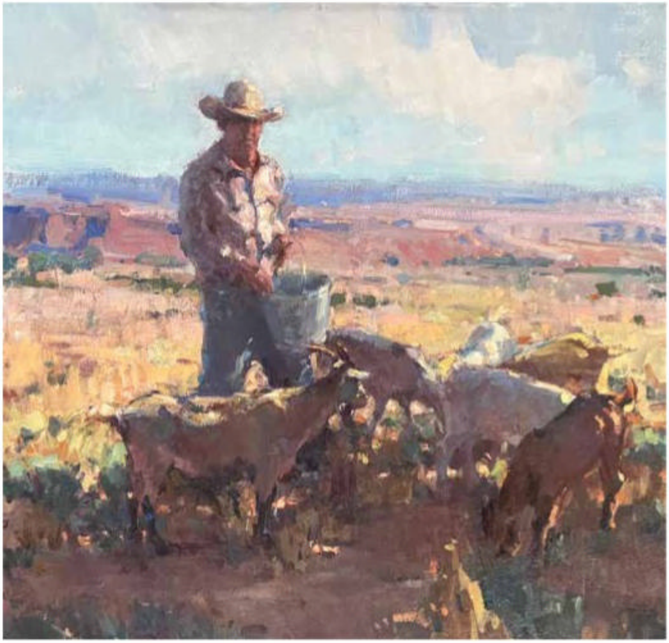


Carolyn Lindsey, *Horse Barn*, oil, 20 x 24 in.



Carolyn Lindsey, *Joeys and Sons*, oil, 9 x 12 in.

Carolyn Lindsey



Carolyn Lindsey, *A Good Shepherd*, oil, 20 x 20 in.

Carolyn Lindsey, a resident of Cuervo, New Mexico, creates paintings in oil, oil pastel and watercolor that capture the people and places in her area and on her travels. Lindsey feels that painting from life is paramount in the understanding and use of light and color. Subject matter presents itself in the repetition and patterns of light and colors in her surroundings. Design becomes the driver of the painting, and the narrative follows. "As an artist, you hope the viewer has a connection to the painting," says Lindsey. "The point at which you leave the subject matter and allow the painting to dictate its own ending is important in completing a successful original work of art." Replicating what she sees is not the goal of her work, it is to create a design that draws the viewer into the painting, at which point they find more—more information and perhaps a connection. She feels creating art is a continual process of learning, with many avenues to success. Lindsey has been an art instructor at several different levels and supports the art community in her area.

Lindsey received her master of fine arts in painting and drawing from Texas Women's University. She is an active member of Plein Air Painters of New Mexico, Plein Air Artists of Colorado and Outdoor Painters Society, Oil Painters of America and American Impressionist Society. Her work is featured in Oil Painters of America's *Virtuosos of OPA Exhibition of Traditional Oils* exhibition, on view at Ballard's Fine Art Gallery in Sheridan, Wyoming, through December 19.

Want to See More?

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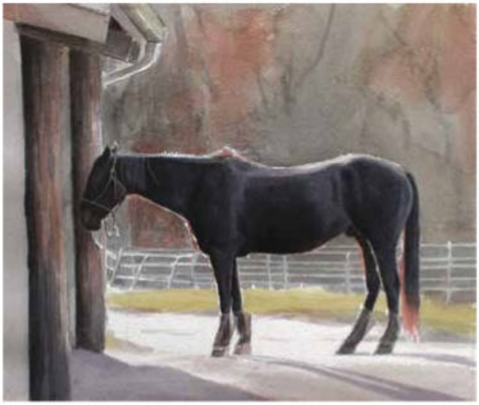
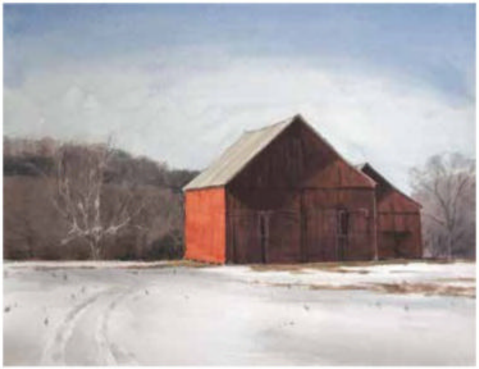
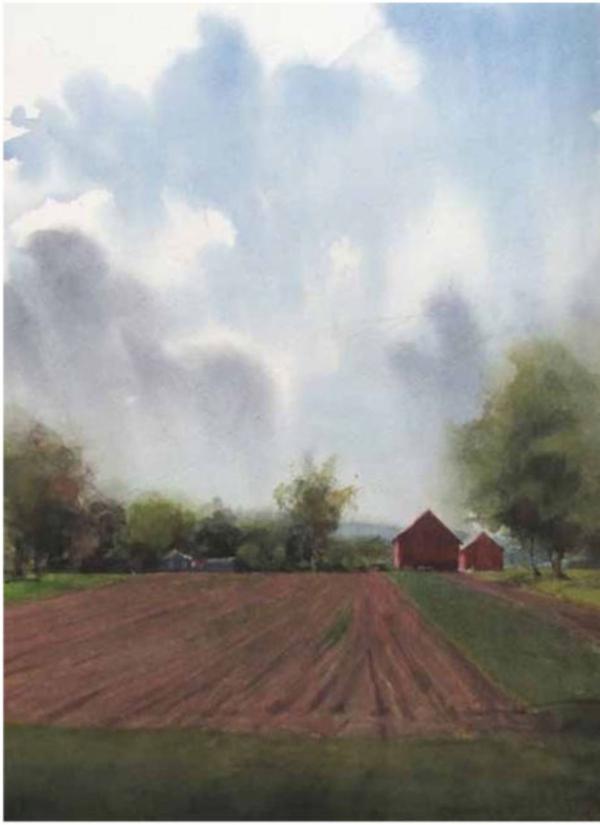


Susan Powell Fine Art, *Golden Hour's Glow*, watercolor, 8 x 10 in., by Mo Myra.



Susan Powell Fine Art, *Waiting on Spring*, watercolor, 11 x 14 in., by Mo Myra.



Susan Powell Fine Art, *Head Held High*, watercolor, 14 x 10 in., by Mo Myra.

Mo Myra

Watercolorist Mo Myra paints with a sensitivity that captures both the quietude and vitality of the natural world. "When I paint, I get a profound feeling of peace, even if it's just for a moment, and I long to impart that feeling to you," she says. Plein air is central to her practice, where shifting light and atmosphere bring spontaneity to each work. Myra finds inspiration in the fields, barns and rural structures of New England. "When I first saw these old tobacco barns lining the landscape I was in complete awe, but as I looked up, the sky was putting on the most incredible show in the featured painting *Head Held High*. I like to think of it as a reminder to always keep your head up," she reflects. "In *Waiting on Spring*, the old barn in the snow caught my attention. I love the ridged edges and warped wood; all of these little bits make it so much more interesting to look at, but an old barn in the snow feels like a story to share, and I couldn't ignore it." Other times, a moment of stillness moves her brush as in *Golden Hour's Glow*. "This horse stopped me in my tracks, the light off his back was breathtaking and I fell in love with the scene right then."

Myra's dedication has earned her national recognition, with awards from *Plein Air Magazine*, Women in Watercolor and the National Watercolor Society. A graduate of Hartford Art School, she continues to balance her roles as painter, teacher and exhibitor, with her works finding homes across the country.

Want to See More?

www.momyra.com

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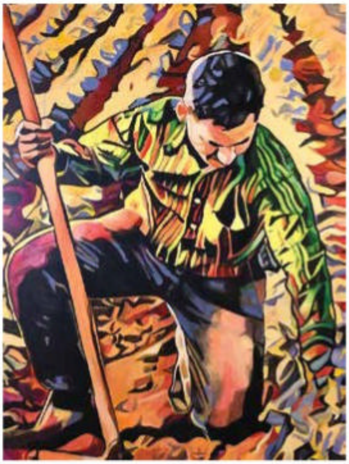


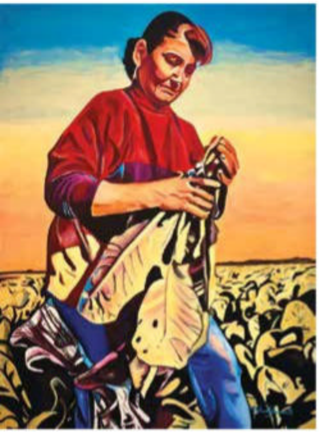
Michael James, *Ojala Que Llueva Cafe en el Campo,* acrylic on canvas, 40 x 30 in.

Michael James

Michael James's paintings are rooted in the human story—acts of endurance, quiet dignity and the emotional truth that connects us all. "By utilizing chromatic stylized realism, I seek not to replicate life but to interpret it—to reveal the unseen rhythms of the human experience through amplified color, light and gesture," he says. "The goal is not imitation, but illumination: to express how a moment feels rather than merely how it looks.

"I am drawn to people whose stories often go unheard—workers, families and dreamers whose labor and love sustain the world around us. In my exhibition *The Hands That Feed Us* [on view at MOAH: CEDAR in Lancaster, California, through November 30], I explore the humanity of migrant farmworkers, honoring their strength and sacrifice while reflecting the broader story of resilience that defines the American experience."

Each canvas becomes a mirror between subject and viewer. Through this lens, James remind us that every life holds beauty and meaning worthy of remembrance.



Michael James, *The Weight of Yield*, acrylic on canvas, 40 x 30 in.

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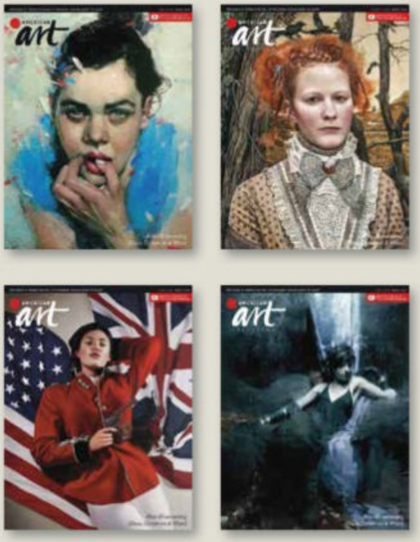

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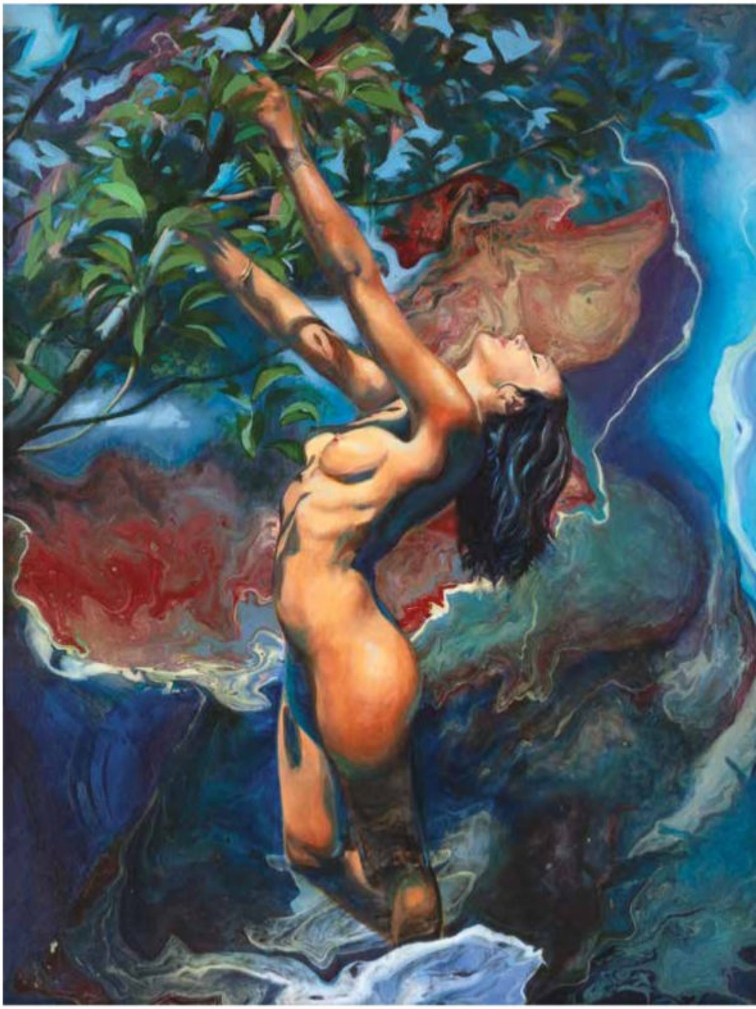
1 Zienna Brunsted Stewart sells four pieces in a pop up art show

"I had a pop up exhibition at a jazz bar in Santa Fe called Tonic," explains artist Zienna Brunsted Stewart, whose work has been featured in *American Art Collector* on numerous occasions. "The owner of the place, Winston, I've known for some time and he offered the front room of his place for me to do a little show." The September show, titled *Make Believe*, only hung for one afternoon. Out of the 25 works on display, four sold. The couple that bought *Nature Spirit* are friends of Brunsted Stewart. "Blake is a photographer in town that I've modeled for a few times...Carrie, the other half of the couple, keeps goats and horses," says the artist. "My boyfriend and I have gone out to their property to help socialize the baby kids by holding and playing with them. Literally the best thing in the world. The figure in *Nature Spirit* is a model that Blake recommended to me, who we both love to work with. Blake and Carrie are very involved in the arts community here and they have a really nice collection. I'm really happy I get to add to it."

2 A collector commissions a unique historical painting by Brent Cotton

"My friend Kevin Thomas, a World War I enthusiast and military collector, commissioned this painting from me," explains artist Brent Cotton. "I'd never taken on a project like this before and was initially hesitant, but I decided it would be a fun challenge." The piece depicts a scene from the June 1918 Battle of Belleau Wood in France. Upon Thomas' request, the piece was titled *"Retreat, hell! We just got here!,"* a famous quote reportedly spoken by U.S. Marine Captain Lloyd W. Williams during the battle when a French commander advised his company to retreat. His defiant words became a Marines motto. "After doing some research, I started with a few rough pencil sketches to explore the composition," explains Cotton. "None of them really excited me, so I decided to dive straight in with brushes and paint to see what would happen. Sometimes those spontaneous projects turn out to be my most successful—the less planning, more intuitive approach can be risky, but in this case, I feel it really paid off."



1

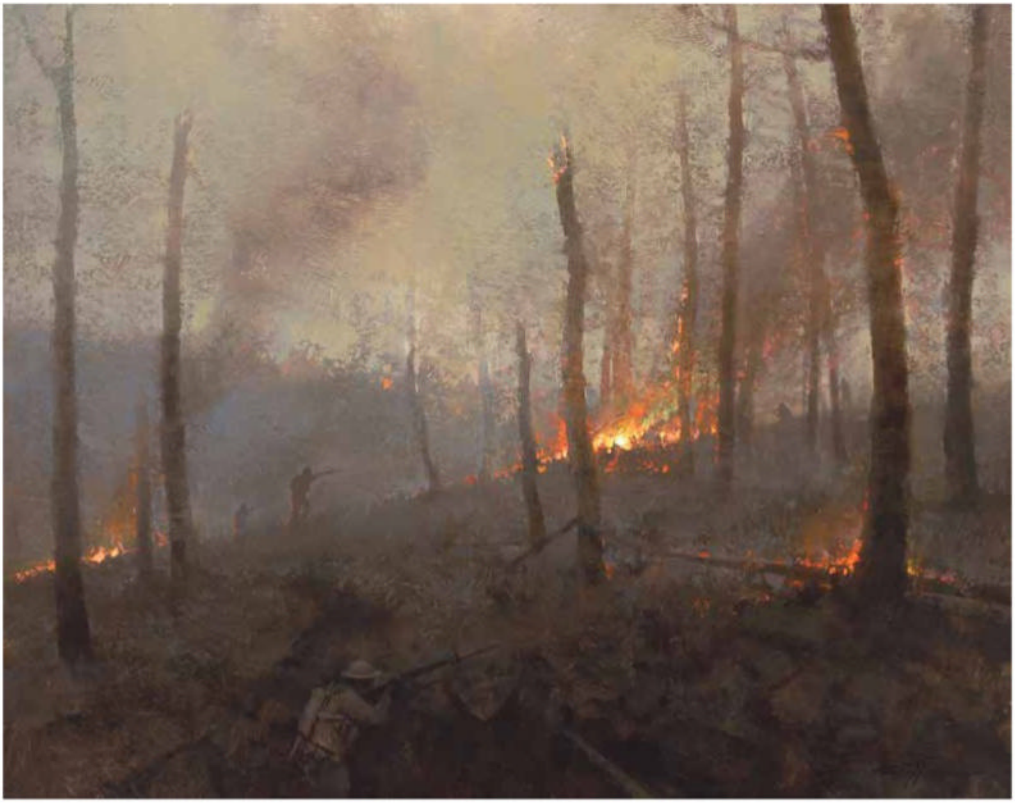
1
Zienna Brunsted Stewart, *Nature Spirit*,
oil on panel, 18 x 14 in.

3 Scottsdale's Xanadu Gallery sells another painting by James 'Kingneon' Gucwa

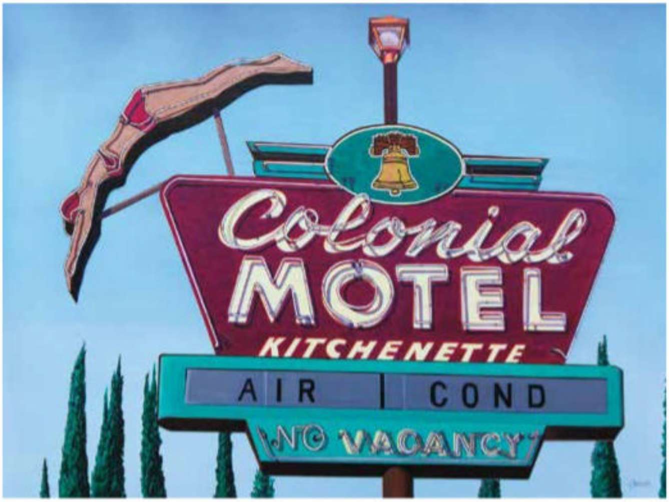
James 'Kingneon' Gucwa is best known for his signature contemporary-realist paintings of America's vintage neon roadside subjects. In this case, *Colonial Motel* found a home and now relocates from the West to the East. Gucwa's new collectors

ARTISTS IN THIS ISSUE

Abraham, Richard 54
Alea, Pavlina 59
Azgour, Michael 51
Babin, Jessie 106
Bach, Del-Bouree 79
Bain, Anna Rose 50
Bansky 109
Béjar, Juan 52
Benhura, Dominic 60
Birkenruth, Kelly 80
Boros, Zoltán 100
Brennan, Lew 83
Brunsted Stewart, Zienna 51, 117
Capote, Yoan 73
Coonrod, Trish 74
Cotton, Brent 119
Currier, Erin 82
Cuscuna, Lisa 109
Cutruzzola, John 52
Davis, Michael T. 75
Dellorco, Chris 91
Featherstone, Frances 32
Fischl, Eric 94
Gorman, Geoffrey 88
Groves, Christopher 92
Haines, Rebecca 89
Harrison, Derek 90
Hoffmann, Miriam 66
Holtzclaw, Paula 20
Horton, Heather 113
Ilyayev, Slava 61
James, Michael 116
Jameson, Lyndsey 71
Karaus, MaryBeth 31
Kazemi, Amanda 104
Kowch, Andrea 51
Kusiak, Hala 62
Lindsey, Carolyn 114
Liu, Ying-He 28
Magill, Anne 113
McGrory, Anne 78
Miranda, Jeremy 38
Mutasa, Gregory 60
Myra, Mo 80
Namyeter, Emre 59
Nelson, Caroline 67
Ogden, Cora 78
Perkins, Davis 31
Petrillo, Phyllis 58
Pierce, Christopher 93
Piskunov, Sergey 53
Preston, Larry 81
Pritchett, Laura E. 77
Pugh, Mark 83
Rakov, Nikki 61
Redzic, Marija (Maya) 90
Rees, Timothy Cover, 84
Retz, Tad 86
Rouisse-Stimpel, Melodye 61
Royston, Scott 30
Rudolph, Jacqueline 111
Ryan, Danial 58
Saffer II, H.M. 92
Salmoiragh, Angelo 76
Sander, Manon 62
Simonsson, Kim 72
Stallone, Sylvester 112
Steele, Ben 98
Thomas, Mary Alayne 88
Walter, Benjamin 77
Wheatley, Justin 88
Wicken, Jessica 54
Williamson, Robin 54
Wilson, Donald Roller 73
Wood, Fay 53
Wyeth, Jamie 70
Zadorine, Andrei 52
Ziemienski, Dennis 52, 83



2



3

first saw *Colonial Motel* in the Xanadu art catalogue several months ago. Gucwa explains, "They considered it for a time, and then, while visiting the Scottsdale gallery from Massachusetts, they fell even more in love with it and made the purchase. They mentioned that it reminded them of their time spent on the road in their youth." ●

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2
Brent Cotton, *Retreat, hell! We just got here!" (The Battle of Belleau Wood; France 1918),* oil on board, 16 x 20 in.

3
James 'Kingneon' Gucwa, *Colonial Motele,* acrylic, 30 x 40 in.

ADVERTISERS IN THIS ISSUE

Abraham, Richard / St. Paul, MN 64
Altamira Fine Art / Scottsdale, AZ 5
Americans in Paris / Laguna Beach, CA 10
An Art Affair / St. Augustine Beach, FL 47
Arcadia Contemporary / New York, NY Cover 2, 1
Bonner David Galleries / Scottsdale, AZ 7
Drew Marc Gallery / Tampa, FL 48
Gallery 35 / Brampton, ON 25
Gallery MAR Carmel / Carmel, CA 15
George Billis Gallery / New York, NY 11
Harrison, Andrea / Los Angeles, CA 45
James, Michael / San Jacinto, CA 64
Karaus, MaryBeth / Cincinnati, OH 27
Kusiak, Hala / Orlando, FL 49
LA Art Show / Los Angeles, CA Cover 3
Lighthouse Art Center / Tequesta, FL 21
Lindsey, Carolyn / Marshall, TX 26
Luminato Gallery / Toronto, ON 17
Morphy Auctions / Denver, PA 9
Patchen, David / San Francisco, CA 19
Perkins, Davis / San Rafael, CA 48
Piskunov, Sergey / Kiev, Ukraine 8
Portrait Society of America / Tallahassee, FL 46
Principle Gallery / Alexandria, VA Cover 4
Redwood Art Group / Miami, FL 44
Richard J. Demato Fine Art Gallery / Romeo, MI 2-3
Royston, Scott / Nottingham, MD 45
Sander, Manon / North Palm Beach, FL 47
Southeastern Wildlife Exposition / Charleston, SC 12
St. Augustine Art Association / St. Augustine, FL 46
Sundstrom, Alice / Sarasota, FL 22
Susan Powell Fine Art / Madison, CT 13
Swift, Peter / Rockville, MD 49
Uline / Pleasant Prairie, WI 29
Wicken, Jessica / Wilmington, NC 48
Williamson, Robin / Sugar Land, TX 29
Wood, Fay / Greensboro, NC 24
ZimSculpt / Harare, Zimbabwe 23

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